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CONTENTS

	PAGE
EVENTS OF THE WEEK	663
HOW DOES FREE TRADE STAND?	666
LORD HALDANE. By J. A. Spender	667
PROSPECTS OF LIBERALISM IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND. By J. D. Macdougall	668
LIFE AND POLITICS. By Kappa	670
THE POTS OF THE CANNIBALS AND THE MEALS OF ESAU. From a Correspondent	671
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Youth and War (Lyn Lloyd Irvine); The Home Secretary and the Court of Criminal Appeal (W. H. Stoker); The Rhineland Occupation (D. M. Stevenson); The Safeguarding of Steel (Leonard Walls); Procuring Miscarriage and Crime (B. Dunlop); Birth Control and Miscarriage (Charis U. Frankenburg); The Young Offender (Maud Gates); "Different To . . ." (E. J. Trechmann)	672-675
ROBERT BURNS. By Augustine Birrell	675
VIDITH AND VISDOM. By J. B. Sterndale Bennett	676
PLAYS AND PICTURES. By Omicron	677
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO: THE ATHENÆUM, AUGUST 27TH, 1828	678

	PAGE
THE WORLD OF BOOKS:—	
The Making of English. By Leonard Woolf	679
REVIEWS:—	
New Novels. By Francis Birrell	680
Coal	681
Contemporary Religious Thought	681
The Scientific Twilight	682
Jonah in Diplomacy	683
The Polynesian Mind	684
The Mind of the Child	684
Poetic Tours	684
THE OWNER-DRIVER. By Rayner Roberts	685
FINANCIAL SECTION:—	
The Week in the City	686

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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE Kellogg Pact is to be signed in Paris on Monday. So far as it is possible to penetrate the fog of secrecy surrounding the signature, it seems that only the original fifteen Governments will be represented at the ceremony, but that the way will be left open for other States to adhere to the treaty by separate protocols immediately after it is signed. Should the Soviet Government notify its adherence, the United States will only acknowledge receipt through the medium of a third party, and may accompany acknowledgment by a reiteration of its refusal to acknowledge the Soviet regime. Whether Soviet Russia will adhere to the Pact on such terms is doubtful. To the United States it may not matter; to Europe, the inclusion or exclusion of Russia makes an immense difference in the value of the Pact and the prospects of disarmament. It is regrettable that Washington should persist so stubbornly in refusing to acknowledge that what is, is. It is still more deplorable that the European Powers should have made no strong effort to obtain the inclusion of Russia as a signatory. Lord Cushendun has described the Pact as the best hope of "deliverance at last from the sickening abomination of war." It may yet prove to be so, but it cannot be denied that the original impulse has been sadly weakened by the reservations and suspicions of the Governments concerned.

* * *

The affair of the Franco-British naval compromise is being handled on both sides of the Channel with almost unbelievable stupidity. Sir Austen Chamberlain's original announcement was so vague in its terms

as to give rise to suspicion in the United States, and was immediately followed by a flood of sensational rumours in the French Press as to a secret naval, military, and political understanding between France and Great Britain. After time had been given for these rumours to take root, a vague and ineffective semi-official disclaimer was issued in Paris. This has been followed by an obviously inspired statement in the TIMES which wholly ignores the sinister interpretation of the affair now so widely current; states that it is undesirable to publish the documents until the comments of all interested parties have been received, and suggests, as a further reason for withholding publication, that the documents are so technical that they "would scarcely be intelligible to other than experts." This suggestion, which reads like a characteristic piece of Admiralty insolence, will certainly not tend to allay misgivings as to the terms of the compromise.

* * *

On the top of this comes another semi-official *communiqué* issued in Paris, which is confined strictly to the naval formula itself, and represents the exemption from limitation of light surface craft, as well as of coastal submarines, as a concession to the French point of view. What is more important, it suggests, although its meaning is far from clear, that no limitation is proposed on any cruisers under 10,000 tons. If this is so, the growing hostility of American opinion can easily be understood, for there is not the slightest chance of the United States consenting to such a proposal. It would be rash to judge the formula until we have the actual text; it would be still more rash to accept the "disclosures" of the French Press at their face value;

but unless steps are taken, and taken quickly, to neutralize their effect, they may do untold damage. The very least that the situation requires is a definite, detailed, official statement as to the scope of the conversations from which the naval formula emerged, and the principal terms of the formula itself. Semi-publicity, supplemented by leakages of dubious accuracy, unites every disadvantage of open and secret diplomacy, and has the advantages of neither.

* * *

The air manœuvres over London were an effective demonstration of the technical efficiency of the Royal Air Force; but they emphasized once more the overwhelming superiority of the attack over the defence. In real war the number of "hits" on specified "targets" would probably have been fewer, and actual casualties would have had a more disturbing effect on the attack than "casualties" adjudicated on by umpires next morning. The fact remains that the eternal see-saw between attack and defence which marks the course of naval and military history has not yet made its appearance in the air and may never do so. With air warfare, we return to the mediæval strategy of cross-raiding. Whatever the strength of the defence, determined men will always get through and inflict damage out of all proportion to their losses. The only real defence lies in the deterrent effect of reprisals—always a broken reed. Raids and counter-raids will be directed against great industrial and administrative centres; victory will go to the country whose civilian population can stand the strain longest, and it will probably be a Pyrrhic victory. More clearly even than at sea, or on the land, the notion of "security" by armaments in the air becomes a tragic farce.

* * *

Faithfully to the tenour of the Report of the Industrial Transference Board, with its insistence that the work of transferring men from the depressed areas is primarily a task for the community, the Ministry of Labour announces that a letter signed by the Prime Minister is being circulated to 150,000 employers. The letter appeals to individual employers to offer employment to men and boys from the depressed areas, even if the number can only amount to one or two. It asks them to sign and return a notice attached to the letter, indicating their general readiness to do so, and offers, if desired, an explanatory call from a representative of the Ministry of Labour. In principle, the plan is rather similar to that of the King's Roll for the placing of disabled soldiers after the war; and it has presumably been inspired by the success of that expedient. On the present occasion, however, the prospects of a considerable response are not good. The appeal comes at a time when employment everywhere is tending to decline, and when accordingly most employers with vacancies to fill may be expected to feel stronger obligations towards local workpeople than towards the surplus miners. We doubt if there is any way of giving an impulse to the work of transference, without a somewhat more favourable economic environment than now obtains.

* * *

Civil Servants are appealing against further reductions in their cost-of-living bonus, in accordance with the fall in prices. Mr. W. J. Brown, general secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association, stated on Tues-

day that the General Purposes Committee of the Association has decided to recommend to the Executive that the Government should be approached concerning the threatened reduction in the Civil Service bonus, and be asked to waive the fall of wages in respect of those members of the Association whose total remuneration does not amount to more than 70s. per week. It should be noted that out of a total of 300,000 workers in the Civil Service, no less than 150,000 receive a total wage below 60s. per week. A number of Local Government authorities, which work on the same scheme of wages payment as the Civil Service, have accepted the principle that the bonus paid to the smaller wage-earners should not be further reduced. The Westminster City Council intends, it is reported, to waive the wages reduction to which it is entitled, but, with economy ruling the Treasury, it is unlikely that Civil Servants will obtain a similar concession.

* * *

At a meeting on Monday of the delegate conference of the South Wales Miners' Federation a decision was taken which may exercise a decisive influence on the future of trade unionism in the coal-mining industry. The conference had before it a scheme for the centralization of authority, as recommended by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, in place of the present delegation of power among the South Wales miners' organizations, according to which the district union lodges have hitherto possessed complete autonomy of action in local affairs. The conference decided by a large majority to accept the proposal for centralization and instructed the South Wales executive to prepare a scheme for that purpose which will be submitted to another meeting of delegates within the next four months. The large measure of local autonomy enjoyed by district union lodges has in the past presented one of the main obstacles to united action by the miners as a whole, and the proposed centralization is the first step to be taken by the miners' leaders with a view to improving the union organization to cope with the present difficulties of the industry. The South Wales conference rejected, however, a proposal from the Miners' Federation of Great Britain to increase the contribution per member from sixpence to one shilling per week. At present the contributions vary between sixpence in South Wales and one shilling in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire. The Miners' Federation want these contributions from different districts to be brought into line, but the depressed state of the mining industry offers little encouragement for an upward revision of miners' subscriptions to the central fund.

* * *

The competition for passengers between the railways and the road transport companies is assuming a form which will be very welcome to the travelling public. The railways have announced a considerable extension of week-end tickets, which are now obtainable to practically everywhere in Great Britain and are available from Friday mornings till Tuesday nights. It is significant that the Railway Information Bureau described this concession as "the biggest attack yet launched by the railways," which "will have the effect of administering a severe blow to the motor-coach." In the midst of this competition, however, there are rumours of negotiations for an extension of the system of combined road and rail tickets. The railway companies deny that any such negotiations have taken place, but add that a cessation of the present fare-

cutting war is desirable and that they would certainly consider any proposal that might be put before them. There seems to be a disposition on both sides to postpone any active steps towards co-operation until the Royal Commission on Traffic has done its work, and that will allow a considerable interval for experiments in competition.

* * *

Draft treaties of arbitration and conciliation have been handed by Mr. Kellogg to the Egyptian representative in Washington. It would, perhaps, have been more tactful if they had been presented through the American representative at Cairo; but inasmuch as Egypt is diplomatically represented in Washington, the procedure adopted is formally correct. The treaties themselves will have to be discussed in Cairo, where the British High Commissioner will have ample opportunity for exercising the influence in foreign affairs reserved by the Declaration of 1922. It is understood that the treaty of arbitration excludes questions involving the interests of a third party, but the presentation of the drafts immediately before the signing of the Kellogg Pact suggests a desire in Washington to test the scope and definition of the new British Monroe Doctrine. If so, the experiment is not particularly well devised, for the British Government has only to ignore it—relying on the exception of third party interests—to make it wholly unconstructive.

* * *

Baron Hayashi has returned to Tokyo and issued a statement to the Japanese Press. It has, at least, the merit of candour. The conduct of the Tokyo authorities may be unwise; it cannot be called deceitful or Machiavellian, for it is fully explained. Nevertheless, it confirms the fears expressed in our last issue that Japan is playing a dangerous game. Baron Hayashi states that, in his view, China is still in unstable equilibrium; the rivalries of the leading generals are as great as ever; their ability to make war on one another is undiminished. If the Manchurian authorities submitted to Nanking at the present moment, they would be joining a faction, and submitting Manchuria to the risks of civil war. He has therefore advised Chang Hsueh-liang not to make any formal agreement with Nanking, but to watch events before committing himself.

* * *

This is quite a different thing from an unqualified refusal to permit the incorporation of Manchuria in a unified China; but whether the Tanaka Cabinet are wise in making the scepticism of a cautious old diplomat the foundation of their policy, is another matter. It may well be that the Nationalist Government are unsteady. European Powers have, none the less, started negotiations with them, and to advise Chang Hsueh-liang not to submit to Nanking is not at all the same thing as advising Chang Tso-ling against an alliance with Wu Pei-fu. The danger of the policy to which the Japanese are temporarily committed is twofold. The other signatories to the Quadruple Agreement will certainly dislike it, and what is of more immediate importance, the Nanking Government have means of resisting and opposing it. Japanese commercial interests in the Yangtze basin are not so great, financially, as they are north of the Great Wall; but they are great enough and they will suffer heavy losses if the Chinese Government decides to fight out the present issues with boycotts and their numerous derivatives. Japan is running the risk of finding her trade in China proper brought to a standstill at the very moment when her competitors are improving their position.

M. Venizelos has been returned to power by the enormous majority of 166 in a Chamber of 240 representatives. The result cannot be explained by the orthodox explanations of a Greek political victory—corruption and intimidation, for corruption and intimidation, to be effective, must be well organized, and M. Venizelos had no time to set up the necessary machinery. Whatever his faults may be, M. Venizelos has often shown a just appreciation of his countrymen's dominant whim. He guessed that they would like a powerful Government, and by procuring a Presidential decree for the abolition of proportional representation, he gave them the means of acquiring one. His colossal majority, which would be difficult to keep in hand in any country, may prove an embarrassment to him and a source of disappointment to the Greek electorate. Fortunately, the relations between Greece and her neighbours are good and quiet for the moment, and as M. Venizelos has always been an advocate of Balkan unity, there is no immediate danger that his unwieldy majority will be kept together by some dangerous slogan.

* * *

In the tribute to Lord Haldane's memory which we publish in another column, Mr. J. A. Spender rightly singles out his work at the War Office as the greatest of his achievements. As a politician, as a lawyer, Lord Haldane was one able man among many. As a War Secretary he has had no possible rival since Cardwell. The problem of combining military efficiency with democratic institutions, of reconciling the divergent points of view of the statesman and the soldier, has baffled many generations of would-be reformers. Lord Haldane brought to the task a rare combination of talents: great administrative ability, a clear perception of military problems, and a singular power of inspiring confidence in the soldiers themselves. Some of our most distinguished generals have borne striking witness to the sympathetic interest and quick appreciation of technical points with which he listened to their views, and the persuasive clarity with which he expounded his own. His ability not only to see what should be done, but to get it done without undue friction, entitles him to the emphatic verdict of Lord Haig: "Viscount Haldane of Cloan, the Greatest Secretary for War England has ever had!"

* * *

Sir George Otto Trevelyan was ninety when he died on August 16th. He was a nephew of Lord Macaulay, and wrote that *Life of his uncle* which, ever since its appearance in 1876, has been recognized as one of the very best of English biographies, and remains to-day a thoroughly readable book. As an historian Trevelyan was notable for his writings on Charles James Fox and on the American Revolution. He was also the author of some light muse, including one poem which, by offending Dr. Whewell, lost its author the Trinity fellowship which then (in 1868) seemed certain to be his. In politics he never reached those very highest places to which it was at one time thought he would attain, but he held such important positions as Chief Secretary for Ireland, Secretary to the Admiralty, and Secretary for Scotland. He was a stout Radical of a very high type, with an inflexible conscience which twice caused him to resign office upon a question of principle. Had his conscience been more easily placated, he might, indeed, have risen higher in politics. He was one of the original members of the Order of Merit. His death leaves Lord Rosebery the sole surviving member of a Gladstone Cabinet.

HOW DOES FREE TRADE STAND ?

THE outlook for trade and employment is not good. In the basic industries, output continues to decline; and few of our advancing industries are in an expansive mood just now. The satisfactory export figures in the foreign trade returns of recent months afford no real encouragement, for these figures reflect, not the present economic position, but that of a considerable time ago. On the other hand, the decline in the imports of raw materials is disquieting. The trend of monetary conditions casts a shadow over the future. The sterling exchange is low, and the possibility must be reckoned with that our trade, and that of Europe generally, may receive a nasty back-hand blow from the apparent determination of the Federal Reserve Board to deflate the stock markets of New York. As matters stand, unemployment is higher than it has been for several years past (apart from the period of the coal dispute); and we are only now entering on the season when employment normally declines.

In this setting, the advocates of every policy with pretensions to assist employment will naturally intensify their propaganda; and prominent among them will be the stalwarts of Protection, who are most unlikely to allow themselves to be muzzled by the elusive compromise evolved in the Cabinet last month. Nothing is more probable than that fiscal controversy will push its way back to the centre of the political stage. It is desirable, therefore, while detachment and reasonableness are still possible, to take stock of the position. Have recent developments or present tendencies weakened any of the old Free Trade arguments? Some of them, in our opinion, yes. On balance, we believe, the case for maintaining our Free Trade tradition is stronger than it has ever been. It may be useful to say something under both these heads. The Free Trade cause will, we suspect, be better served if the emphasis is laid on what is true and important rather than on what has become dubious and unconvincing.

In the first place, then, it must be recognized that the proposition that imports are paid for by exports has never been a really watertight answer to the claim that Protection might reduce unemployment. Stated, indeed, in the form which is sometimes given to it, that "goods pay for goods," the proposition is untrue. As we know to our cost, the volume of our recorded exports is seriously below the pre-war level, while there has been no corresponding contraction in the volume of our imports. It is only possible to establish a precise equation between imports and exports by reckoning in all sorts of "invisible" imports and exports, among them loans or borrowings from abroad. Moreover, this external borrowing and lending covers not only long-term investments, but floating balances as well. The movement of floating balances is capable, as we have seen in recent years, of assuming dimensions which dwarf quite important fluctuations in the volume of foreign trade. It is, therefore, quite erroneous to suppose that a given curtailment of commodity imports must necessarily involve a corresponding curtailment of commodity exports. It may merely involve

an alteration in the balance of international indebtedness.

This, moreover, is all that it is *likely* to involve, except in so far as the curtailment of imports is directly prejudicial to our exporting industries. Take, for example, the proposal that cheap foreign steel should be excluded in order to protect our own steel-works. We are entitled to argue that our export trade would suffer as the result of the higher prices which exporting industries would have to pay for their steel, or for other reasons of this tangible order. We are not entitled to assume that there would be an additional handicap, arising from the proposition that imports are paid for by exports, and operating through some mysterious and indefinable chain of causation upon exports in general.

Clearly, however, the tangible considerations which remain are, in a case like iron and steel, of the very first importance. Our imports of iron and steel are to a very large extent the raw materials of products such as galvanized sheets and tinplates, which are subsequently exported and which have to face competition in world markets. Our total iron and steel exports represent nearly three times the value of the imports—to say nothing of the exports of industries like engineering and shipbuilding to which steel is an important raw material. Any policy which involved an increase in British steel prices would, therefore, be manifestly hazardous; it would endanger a much larger trade than it could hope to safeguard. Indeed, we may reasonably go further. It would be a desperate course for an industry like iron and steel, which is accustomed to export in one form or another the greater part of its production, to attempt to live on the basis of sheltered prices. Somehow or other it must contrive to hold its own with foreign competition, or lose a large proportion of its existing trade.

The truth of this is so far recognized that it has become an integral part of the advocacy of the safeguarding of steel to insist that prices would not thereby be raised. Some advocates have so robust a faith in this contention that they actually suggest that definite undertakings to this effect should be given before safeguarding duties are imposed. The argument is the familiar one—that fuller production would mean lower overhead charges, so that the profit-earning capacity of the industry would be restored, without its needing to raise its prices. There are several reasons for regarding this argument, as applied to steel, with scepticism. That British steel prices should not rise above their present level would not suffice to meet the case of the consuming industries, like tinplates; for the foreign steel, which represents their raw material, and which it is proposed to exclude, is at present substantially cheaper than British steel. Moreover, the economies of full production turn on the output of the individual firm rather than on that of the industry as a whole, and would best be attained by a process of "rationalization" which concentrated production on the most efficient plants. It is possible that the needed reorganization of the industry might be facilitated by the protection of a safeguarding duty, and, if so, this would

certainly be a strong argument in favour of a duty; but it is extremely doubtful.

We remain, therefore, of the opinion that the safeguarding of steel would represent a most hazardous policy. None the less, the condition of the industry is so serious, and the part which it plays in our economic life is so important, that we could not for our part assert that the case for Free Trade, in so far as it rests upon these domestic arguments, is as clear and conclusive as it used to be. Whatever the defects of the organization of our steel works, there is not really much margin for a reduction in its costs. Wages are low, profits are mostly negative; selling prices are well below the general wholesale index-number. It is not easy, therefore, for the industry to regain a really competitive footing. Rather than allow it to suffer a persistent decline, a point would certainly come when it would be preferable to run a big risk with the secondary industries.

But now let us turn to the other side of the picture. We have been arguing, so far, without a reference to the effect which a radical change in our fiscal policy would have on the fiscal policies of other countries. To leave this question in the background was, in pre-war days, the only sensible course. It was uncertain whether the erection of a protective tariff by Great Britain would be more likely to provoke tariff increases in other countries, or to enable us, by arming us with a bargaining weapon, to secure reductions. To-day, in the situation created by the World Economic Conference, this question is not open to reasonable doubt. In Europe, in particular, the tariff position is just now exceptionally plastic and impressionable. The minds of statesmen and peoples are torn between two opposing sets of ideas. On the one hand, many parts of Europe have been suffering from the same prolonged economic *malaise* that has stimulated Protectionism in this country; there is the same deflationary trend, the same problem of surplus capacity in important industries. There is not unnaturally the same tendency to look to tariffs as a remedy; and, just as here, this tendency threatens to undermine the Free Trade traditions of Scandinavia. On the other hand, the Continental imagination, influenced largely by the contrast between American prosperity and European poverty, has been impressed by the mutual damage which tariff barriers do, and has been caught by the idea of Europe as an economic unit. It was this state of mind which made the Report of the World Economic Conference possible.

We have, therefore, before us a real opportunity of moving in the direction of freer world trade. But we have also to reckon seriously with the opposite possibility. The trend in every country was towards higher tariffs before the Economic Conference met; if the work of the Conference should break down that trend will be resumed; everywhere the forces of economic nationalism will tighten their grip; and the outlook for a foreign trading country like ourselves will become increasingly grim.

The fact that this issue is hanging in the balance should, in our view, be decisive as regards our own fiscal policy. Recourse by Great Britain to Protection would suffice to kill the whole Economic Conference

idea. To throw our whole weight behind the work of the Conference, unless and until it demonstrably fails, should be a cardinal principle of our statesmanship. This is a new aspect of the fiscal controversy which it is important to bring home to the British public.

LORD HALDANE

By J. A. SPENDER.

HOW often, when one reflects on past times, it seems as if great issues hung upon a thread of accidental circumstance. Haldane's coming to the War Office in December, 1905, which, as everybody now agrees, had momentous consequences for the country, was just a by-product of the endeavour which he and Sir Edward Grey made, during the formation of the Liberal Government, to induce Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman to go to the House of Lords. By the time that incident was wound up, Sir Henry had only one Cabinet office at his disposal (bar the Foreign Office, which went to Grey), and that was the War Office. This had come to be regarded as the grave of reputations. Lansdowne, Brodrick, and Arnold-Forster had successively tried their hands at it, and the path of the new Minister, whoever he might be, was strewn with the wreckage of their impossible reform schemes. C.-B. certainly was not unaware of the penitential nature of the appointment. He considered himself to have suffered many things from "Master Haldane" during the Boer War and the days of the Liberal League, and he agreed a little grimly, when Massingham said "Serve him right," on hearing of the appointment.

C.-B. had a nickname for everybody, and he called Haldane "Schopenhauer," and for the next eighteen months asked with increasing curiosity "what Schopenhauer was doing among the generals." Schopenhauer was quietly upheaving the entire War Office, and doing it in such a way as to persuade (1) the generals that they were doing it themselves; (2) his radical colleagues that he was a great economist, and (3) the Prime Minister, who was an old War Secretary and an ardent Cardwellian, that his scheme was the crown and climax of the Cardwell system. On this basis he built up the Expeditionary Force and the Territorial Army, and when it came to the test, the military machine that he provided was as near perfection as could be. Only those who remember the muddling and blundering of the early stages of previous wars can fully appreciate the service it rendered to the country in 1914. That was literally inestimable both for us and for our Allies.

I saw the development of this scheme through all its stages, and it was by far the greatest administrative achievement that I can remember. Haldane presented himself to the War Office in December, 1905, as a complete ignoramus who was willing to give such inexpert intelligence as he possessed to helping the experts to clear their thoughts. These thoughts, as they cleared, took the shape that he desired; but undoubtedly there were moments when it required all his ingenious and subtle mind to keep the three basic propositions running on parallel lines. It helped him not a little that few of his colleagues took any interest in military matters, and that his explanations to the House of Commons were couched in metaphysical terms which nine-tenths of its members were totally unable to understand. There can have been nothing quite like the mystification produced by his combination of the metaphysical and the military in his explanations of his Estimates, but the result was that the House of Commons gave it up and left

it all to Haldane—which was the best thing it could have done.

The treatment of Haldane, when the war broke out, was an instance of fantastic ingratitude of which it is safe to say that everyone who took part in it is now heartily ashamed. The legend that he was a pro-German rested on the fact that he had been partly educated in a German University and that he was supposed to have said, in speaking of his philosophical masters, that Germany was his "spiritual home." He always denied that he ever did say it, but that was no matter; it was enough that he spoke German and professed an admiration for German science and philosophy. His colleagues presently added substance to myth by employing him to talk to the Kaiser and sending him on a mission to Germany, thinking him to be a serviceable man who knew the people and spoke the language. But none of them in those days thought of him for a moment as politically pro-German, and if they were misled about the intentions of the German Government, it certainly was not by him or as the result of his mission. The real misleading factor, if that word is properly used, was the apparent improvement in Anglo-German relations during the Ambassadors' Conference of 1913 and the subsequent Colonial negotiations which had been all but completed when the war broke out. With this Haldane had little or nothing to do, and if his attitude during the previous years can be summarized in a sentence, I should say that it was one of anxious awareness of the formidable nature of German preparations and German policy as shaping in the hands of the military caste.

Anyhow it was a curious stroke of irony that the man who for the greater part of his earlier life had been thought of as a high-flying Imperialist should towards the end of it have been the butt of the jingo patriots. He suffered himself in the end exactly the fate which he used to predict for the Liberal Party, if it got out of touch with some prevailing sentiment. He was in those former days rather prickly in his Imperialism, and memory recalls some stubborn hours when the efforts of the mediator seemed worse than useless. But through it all he was always one of the staunchest Radicals in domestic politics, and his fertile mind was as full of schemes and programmes as any modern Radical could desire. I look back on the weekly lunches with him which were my privilege for a great many years, as times of rare mental refreshment and encouragement. He was delightful in talk and the staunchest and loyalest of friends. If I had been in any personal trouble or difficulty of my own, there was no man I would sooner have gone to and unburdened my whole mind. Many did—how many will never be known.

It will always be a debated question of political conduct whether Haldane's friends in the Liberal Cabinet ought to have stood by him, when the Tory Party insisted on his exclusion from the Coalition of 1915. Some of those who were hottest in the pursuit at that time seem now to suggest that his Liberal colleagues ought to have stood firm against their violence. But the country was in the middle of a great war and in one of its darkest phases, and to have stood firm would—it seemed at the time—have been to wreck the prospects of a united Government and gravely to imperil the national interests. It was urged by even the more moderate Tories that Haldane's unpopularity, however undeserved, had to be accepted as a fact which no Government in war-time could afford to ignore. Some of us protested to the last moment and afterwards, but the main burden must rest on those who insisted on his exclusion. Merely having to submit to it inflicted a wound on self-respect which went deep and counted for a good deal in the subsequent months.

Those who knew Haldane's mind never doubted that his adhesion to the Labour Party was honest and disinterested, or that he was bound to be disappointed in the result. But nothing discouraged him, and no warnings about health or the limits of human capacity could prevent him from working to the end, all day and half the night, sitting on the bench, writing elaborate judgments, starting a new book of philosophy, answering the call of any body of students in any part of the country who wished him to talk to them about life and education. He knew how to enjoy the good things of life, but thus he lived from first to last, giving himself unsparingly and benevolently to the service of his fellow beings.

PROSPECTS OF LIBERALISM IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND

IT is exceedingly difficult to decide what Liberalism is likely to accomplish in the West of Scotland at the next General Election. This area has suffered heavily in the nation-wide economic crisis that has reigned since 1921. The acute housing shortage, though somewhat relieved by the energetic efforts of the local authorities with Glasgow Corporation at their head, still exists to a formidable extent. There are great tracts of slums and semi-slums crying out for abolition. And the working class, awakened politically to a degree hitherto unknown, by thirty years of slogging Socialist propaganda at the street corners, are less patient of these evils than they used to be. The impassioned conflicts during the war period, the stand of the revolutionary leaders and their prison martyrdom, the adult educational work of such men as John Maclean, gave birth to a Socialist tradition among the Clyde workers the decline of which can only be the effect of time and experience.

Nevertheless it is incontestable that a gradual process of disillusionment is going on. Anyone sensitive to, and observant of the prevailing state of mind is bound to admit that the wave of revolutionary opinion is moderating. While it would be risky to asseverate that the movement is exhausted or that a recoil has already commenced, its force is certainly abating. The speeches served up by Mr. John Wheatley and his fellows at the Labour gatherings are as strongly spiced as ever, but the seasoned palates of their hearers are incapable of the sensations of delight once experienced when the anti-capitalist condiment was new. A hollow note has crept into the rhetoric, a cheerless apathy has settled down on the audiences. For both parties—orators and auditors alike—have eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

After all, something has happened since the first flush of enthusiasm in the huge, excited mob that packed itself into St. Enoch Square, sent off these fervid apostles to Westminster to inaugurate a new era in British politics. A Labour Government has held office; and proved astonishingly, incredibly similar to all the Governments of the beastly bourgeoisie which preceded it. Then, again, there is Russia. The truth does eventually percolate through if only given time. The doings of the Bolshevik oligarchy have killed any idea there was that the sun of working-class emancipation is rising in the East. Moreover, the bubble of trade-union omnipotence was pricked once and for all by the General Strike. And the Catholic population of the city and district, no inconsiderable factor in its political orientation, are by no means thirled to the Labour Party. They are uneasy about birth control, and the clergy assuredly do not look with any favour on the predominant materialist tint of much Socialist oratory.

Our Labour representatives are to be consoled with, if not actually pitied. Their contact with affairs in London has taught them many things. One can imagine the innocent bewilderment of Kirkwood when he found that the world was a much more complicated, not to say wicked, place than ever he had imagined. That justice for the poor is not to be got even by the most passionate imprecations on the rich. That the idealization of the workers affords no security for their social elevation in cold fact. Maxton was no child when he went away, but even he must have discovered, I should fancy, after a sojourn in the capital that there was a provincial narrowness in his culture which called for emendation. As for John Wheatley, the able *meneur* of the Left Wing, I am unable to conceive that the experiences attendant on his period of office could come as any revelation to his thoroughly prosaic mind. But with the solitary exception of Wheatley, the rest of the Labour men from this Red hotbed have been rudely awakened from their infantile visions as to the magician's wand supposed to lie hidden in the House of Commons. They are distracted in their minds, accordingly, and this is spoiling their political morale.

Which brings us to the gravamen of the charge against all of them. They have learned the conditions, limitations, and circumstances surrounding real action in the field of British politics as it is constituted to-day, and refuse notwithstanding to share that precious knowledge with the masses. They continue, in the name of a vaunted idealism, to feed the imagination of the common man on happy dreams of an impossible felicity immediately attainable, while all the time conscious that the utmost likely to be achieved in this country during the next twenty years is: a reorganization and readjustment of capitalism fitting it to changed world conditions; and the taking up again of the thread of Liberal social reform broken off by the war. This Janus mask they feel themselves compelled to wear—one face turned blankly on the dispiriting realities of London, the other, oh! so shining, towards the New Jerusalem as bodied forth on the platforms in Glasgow—is crippling their political carriage. The taint of hypocrisy has insinuated itself into their finest declamations, their sincerity is robbed of its former full-blooded appeal, their conduct politically *vis-à-vis* the working class has undergone a moral declension; they therefore will only have themselves to blame if the transparent honesty and studied moderation of the new Liberal programme wins the industrial electorate away from them.

At the same time, although the average Labour voter in this quarter has received little assistance from his accustomed shepherds in finding his bearings, he has been silently noting events: watching the "evolution" accomplished by the party in the throwing overboard of all its most venerated shibboleths concerning monarchy, the House of Lords, the Empire, Protection, and so forth; struck by the social rise of the leaders, marked by the company they now keep; flabbergasted by the astounding coolness with which Labour in office settled down to do all that it had sworn never, never, to endure. He is still a Labour voter, but his affection for the Red Flag is waning, he is becoming critical of men once accounted infallible, and beginning to be curious about what the new Liberalism stands for. There is a sound sense for the practical in the Scottish working class. Their loyalty will hold them to the Labour creed so sedulously inculcated during long years—but only for a time. Ultimately it will have to submit to the test of experience. Their logic is already disintegrating the hard crust of dogmatism overlying the Labour programme and penetrat-

ing to the fertile soil beneath which it finds composed of purely Liberal constituents.

Properly speaking, the Maxton-Cook manifesto is an attempt to repair the ravages of working-class criticism on the fabric of the old Labour view. But they have undertaken an impossible task. No amount of beating of the big drum can deafen the West of Scotland workers to the insidious appeal of reason. The old cries, the old sentiments awaken no echo. The average Labour man is tired of magic and incantations: he wants sound thinking to be applied to the social problem.

The General Strike overthrew at a stroke the most cherished convictions of a whole generation of Syndicalists and Industrial Unionists in Glasgow. The idea that a united working class could by direct action upset the existing social order had to be relegated to the rubbish heap of exploded notions. It was seen that trade unionism is not all-powerful. That the community, particularly in Britain, contains huge classes of citizens who are not trade unionists and therefore are not prepared to remain inactive while a strike is sapping the foundations on which society rests. The theory that the Walls of Jericho would fall if the toilers merely folded their arms for a short space had to be recognized as misleading. Trade unionism, even with its utmost energies stretched, proved incapable of averting the fall in wages rendered inevitable by circumstances. The workers are disillusioned as to the boons which it is within the power of trade unionism to confer. It has its uses; but these are of a decidedly less extensive character than those which its more bumptious advocates have imagined.

Revolutionary feeling in general among the Clyde workers has been damped down by the true accounts they are now beginning to receive concerning the results of the Russian Revolution. Criticisms in the capitalist Press, as being in their opinion necessarily prejudiced, they simply scoffed at. But some of their trusted leaders have recently visited Sovietia and returned with accounts anything but encouraging. The gross exaggerations and absurd claims respecting the conditions enjoyed by the Russian workers are being discounted. When the engineers and ship-builders of Glasgow learn that their mates in Russia are subject to the tyrannical rule of a cruel and privileged Communist caste they are less enamoured of schemes promising, at the price of some bloodshed, to institute social equality here. They begin to see British democracy, with all its shortcomings, in rather a juster light than before.

The Catholic vote is only Labour as a result of the backwash of the Irish struggle. Liberalism can quite conceivably regain its lost foothold in the Irish community of the West of Scotland if the changed character of Liberalism as the willing exponent of necessary social reorganization and its unchanged character as the steadfast guardian of the rights of minorities is brought home to the Irish voters.

The Liberal Industrial programme must be propagated energetically in the Clyde area if the star of Liberalism is to rise here again. The idea of statutory works councils will have a wonderful vogue in this region, where the traditions of the Clyde Workers' Committee are still alive, if skilfully and assiduously advocated at the factory gates during the meal hours. The active trade unionists would feel that the struggles and efforts of the past were not wholly without meaning if they could see their favourite idea thus concretized, even though in a relatively narrower way, in actual legislation. There are thousands of Socialists in the Glasgow works, grounded in the fundamentals of economics, who are perfectly capable of appreciating the power and coherence of the scheme, prepared by the

economic experts of the Liberal Party, for directing the stream of investment towards the development of home industry. I am convinced that the attractions of this realist programme will make numerous converts in the Labour ranks among those who have been thirsting for proposals not obviously doctrinaire, incompetent and impracticable, like the specimens presented up till now by their own party.

I state, and emphasize, the existence of a new current of scepticism and doubt among the Labour voters in the West of Scotland. They are in the sobered mood of people emerging from a bout of political intoxication and in the right humour for receiving the calm message of a regenerated Liberalism resuming once more the social tasks in harmony with its grand tradition.

J. D. MACDOUGALL.

LIFE AND POLITICS

IT was inevitable that the distressing result at North Aberdeen should have caused questioning of the wisdom of fighting by-elections that are obviously hopeless for the Liberals. Disquiet about the general policy is no new thing; I have heard these murmurs after every election in which the Liberals have done badly. The Liberals I meet seem to be fairly evenly divided in opinion. Supporters of the plan of fighting everywhere or almost everywhere think that a revival is impossible unless the local Liberals, however few they may be, are given something definite to fight for and someone definite to vote for; they talk besides of the importance of propaganda apart from winning. Sceptics admit the force of all this, but hold that the moral effect of a disastrous defeat does more harm to the prospects of Liberalism than the educational value of a contest does good. I am inclined to agree with the latter school of thought. It is, I think, extremely important at this stage of the Liberal Party's struggle for its rightful place in politics that the cynics should not be encouraged to sneer and the defeatists mournfully to rejoice in their own superior judgment. North Aberdeen was a bad case. It was a certain Labour seat, and no one supposed it to be anything else, and I would say myself that Mr. Wedgwood Benn is still sufficient of a Liberal to justify Liberals voting for him. The result of taking the opposite view was not merely a defeat but a humiliation. Aberdeen people are sensible politicians, and there must have been many Liberals who refused to throw away their votes on a candidate who had not the faintest chance of winning. Fighting for the sake of fighting is as wasteful in party as in international politics. I think that North Aberdeen was a warning that should not be neglected out of a mistaken loyalty to the party managers.

I remember some pictures in PUNCH illustrating the letter of a man who wrote to a company that had sold him a cure for double chin. He complained that it had "only shifted the trouble"—to the back of his neck. This came irreverently to mind while reading Mr. Baldwin's rather tepid appeal to firms to lessen unemployment "inch by inch." No doubt something can be done in this way, but Mr. Baldwin seems to have swallowed whole the by no means convincing arguments of the Industrial Transference Board intended to show that a great deal can be done. It is true, no doubt, that ex-miners, who are often extremely intelligent and adaptable—they are doing well here and there in artificial silk factories—can make good in other industries if they are given the chance. At the same time, there is either work to do or there is not, and if an employer in Southampton gives a job to a miner from South

Wales he is not giving it to someone in Southampton, who remains unemployed. The trouble has been "shifted." There may be a comparatively small number of "marginal jobs" and so on, and this well-meaning appeal should help, but Mr. Baldwin must not be allowed to reap laurels for mere palliatives, such as emigration and this strictly limited scheme. He has been for years swathing the ugly facts of unemployment in a rosy mist of optimistic perorations, and deserves at the election to be held to account for his complete failure to carry out any big constructive proposals, such as are to be found in the Liberal and Labour programmes. Mr. Baldwin suffers from the characteristic weakness of the rhetorician; he seems to doze happily in the belief that a fine phrase said is a fine deed done. To appeal to employers to help "the wounded in spirit" does credit to his heart, and his pretty skill in words—meanwhile, the figures mount up inexorably day by day, and the Government, timid as ever, dare not attempt big schemes of national improvement; still less to raise the school age.

The general deduction from the air manoeuvres over London, that the defence is more or less helpless, and that in the next war London will be at the mercy of the enemy, is sound enough, and the requisite moral is being drawn. The military people are probably not altogether pleased at having unwillingly provided a powerful reinforcement of peace propaganda. From the strictly military point of view, the lesson drawn by the experts is rather different from that drawn by terrified Londoners. They look at it from the opposite standpoint. Their attention is concentrated chiefly on the success of the bombers, for this was more a test of our own capacity to bomb the enemy than of the efficiency of the defence, as to which there were few illusions. The Air Force is congratulating itself, for if the "raids" have shown anything, it is that in the next war the defence of the enemy will be insufficient to prevent our bombers doing immense damage to his vital places—his capital, ports, and industrial towns. It is thus that the experts interpret the problem of defence, and what the raids have "proved" is that when the next war comes we shall be able to add to a ruined London a ruined — or —. Not much satisfaction is to be derived by the non-military mind from this demonstration. If we are stupid enough to have another war London will deserve ruin, and that is what it will assuredly get.

The painful episode of the permission given to one of our cavalry regiments to take part in the French Army manoeuvres on the Rhine can only be explained as due to sheer bungling at the Foreign Office. If Sir Austen had been at his post it is inconceivable that this piece of stupidity would have been allowed. To the soldiers on the spot, French and British, it no doubt seemed a perfectly innocent arrangement; but then politics is not, or ought not to be, their job. There ought surely to have been someone in Whitehall with sufficient sense to foresee the justifiable disquiet in Germany. The semi-official "dope" supplied to the newspapers convinces nobody. It is beside the point to talk of the absence of any political significance; a child should have known that in the inflammable state of feeling in Germany about the Occupation and the suspicions of closer co-operation between the French and the British, political significance would be attached to it. The incident has unfortunately added to the prevalent uneasiness about the handling of foreign affairs just now. The obstinate silence maintained in official quarters as to the real meaning of the naval agreement is causing serious mischief, and this small but irritating blunder about the

manœuvres came at just the wrong moment. The decision to allow the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars to join the French Army for manœuvres in the Rhineland should be publicly reversed. Or, is Locarno a farce after all?

* * *

The obituary writers have not thrown much light on the most perplexing incident in Lord Haldane's career—his conversion to Labour. One may safely dismiss the cynical explanation that he left the Liberal Party owing to resentment at his being dropped out of the Government in 1915, though the surrender of the Prime Minister of that date to the ignorant and shameless clamour against Haldane was not at all creditable. Haldane was too philosophic in temper to cherish resentment. It is equally absurd to suggest, as people do in private, that his motive was ambition. He was too old, too sated with achievement to care about office. It might be unkindly suggested that he found it easy to sever himself from the Liberal Party because he was never more than half a Liberal, but the fact that he was singularly—even for a Whig—out of touch with the common mind does not go far to explain his rather sudden adhesion to the Labour Party. He was indeed of all the prominent Liberal statesmen of his time the one most removed from popular sympathies; he had the merits and the demerits of the typical doctrinaire. Haldane was not given to personal confessions, but the most reasonable account of his conversion was given in conversation by himself. The passion of his life was education; his ambition was to see Britain as well educated as Germany. He persuaded himself that a Labour Government was most likely to do something big for education; and certainly the Labour Government showed more progressive energy there than in any other department. Haldane was not, I think, very happy in the Labour Party, and he never had much more than an academic relation with it. He expressed philosophic doubts about nationalization, after which his position in the party became more isolated than ever.

* * *

Some remarkable revelations have been made in a Sunday paper about the rascally practices which have prevailed at a greyhound racing track near London. The revelations are made by the company that runs the track. It has been investigating the causes which have led to the decline of public interest in the races, and the results as given are most interesting. Those of us who held that this new sport was silly were always assured that it was at all events clean. Now we learn that on this racecourse the company has detected such tricks in the kennels that the racing has been as dirty as possible. The dogs have been tampered with in the interests of betting men; in short, this "sport" has in this instance been exploited by some of the worst cheats and tricksters imaginable. It has been suspected from the start that greyhound racing would attract the off-scourings of racecourse rascality; now we know on the evidence of the company running this course—which is, honourably, anxious to cleanse the abuses it has discovered—that it has been victimized in precisely this way. The Cabinet recently showed itself so anxious to make money out of betting that they could spare no Parliamentary time for the modest measure which would have allowed authorities to veto new tracks if that was desired by local opinion. These revelations will strengthen the case for local option in the matter.

* * *

Sir George Trevelyan—according to some interesting reminiscences by Mr. F. W. Hirst—was very proud of the Shakespeare associations of his estate at Welcombe, near

Stratford. Shakespeare owned land at Welcombe, and was part-owner of the tithes. Sir George Trevelyan seems to have related to Mr. Hirst the interesting local tradition that in later life Shakespeare said to a neighbour who went up to London in connection with enclosures, "I could not bear to see Welcombe enclosed." One would like to believe in the truth of so touching a legend, but I have always understood that what is known of the story suggests that Shakespeare did not bother much about the enclosure so long as his own interests were safe. What happened apparently was that in 1614 an attempt by one Combe and others to enclose the common fields at Welcombe was stoutly resisted by the owners, the Corporation of Stratford. Shakespeare and his fellow-owner of the tithes obtained from Combe's agents a deed indemnifying both against any injury they might suffer from the proposed enclosure. Having in this way secured himself against possible loss, Shakespeare, according to Sir Sidney Lee, "threw his influence" on the side of the would-be enclosers. The Corporation wrote to him, imploring his aid, but (again quoting Lee, who rejects the doubtful evidence of Shakespeare having "expressed disgust" at the enclosure), "it is plain that in the spirit of the agreement with Combe's agent, Shakespeare continued to lend Combe his countenance." The fact is that the less one learns about Shakespeare's business life the easier is it to cherish a high romantic view of his character.

KAPPA.

THE POTS OF THE CANNIBALS AND THE MEALS OF ESAU

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

"WE shall sell pots to the cannibals if they want them and can pay for them," is sound common sense; but surely the line should be drawn at defending cannibalism, even if carried on in pots of British manufacture. We need not inquire into the nature of the Government, the justice of the frontiers, and the moral level of foreign nations with whom we trade, but we certainly should not allow considerations of trade to influence our judgment of right and wrong in international affairs. There was a time when it was quite customary for British politicians to accept financial advantages from the Government—contracts, favours, &c.; in our own time things of this description can be accepted from foreign Governments only, because in that case they are covered by the magic formula of "promoting British trade," the nation as a whole being supposed to find its account in the transaction, or, as the unpolished would say, to participate in the bribe. Now, as in 1870, when John Morley wrote these words, there are people in this country who "would revere the memory and pity the sorrows of a Caligula if he had only done something to augment [British] exports and imports," and who "cannot bring themselves to think any ill of a ruler who was once a party to a commercial treaty" with Great Britain.

British politicians go to one of the new States in Central or Eastern Europe; they are elaborately and lavishly entertained by the Government and the governing circles, taken round in saloon cars, invited to country houses, &c. The "developing" of trade relations between the particular country and Great Britain is discussed, contracts are hinted at, credits are suggested; meantime the actual or presumed political importance of the distinguished guests is never lost sight of, nor do they probably mind its

receiving due attention. They are taken to some *Chezónrzciszyn* or *Hazafalvakiralyi* (each of them bearing three different but equally euphonic names in the languages of the other claimants to the highly eligible place), or they are shown it on maps, historical, ethnographical, &c., if in the possession of rivals. Then in florid after-dinner speeches the distinguished British guests declare themselves impressed by "the obvious justice of the claim," and, full of hopes of "trade," return to Great Britain staunch champions of the country they have just visited. Their friendship continues to be cultivated by its diplomatic representatives, who feel that they have thus acquired a foothold in British politics. But are even the mere appearances of such a connection between trade contracts and the part which Great Britain is to play in international affairs compatible with our national dignity and the position of the greatest Empire in the modern world?

A Member of Parliament must not engage in contracts with our own Government; should he be free to solicit them from foreign Governments? Financial considerations must not influence him in home politics; should even the mere appearances be tolerated of their influencing him (or us) in international affairs? Should the prestige of a member of either House of Parliament ever be used to add weight to the offers of a commercial traveller, even if the man himself derives no personal profit from it and does it exclusively for the sake of British trade? The standards to be observed by Civil Servants in business dealings have recently been discussed, elucidated, and reaffirmed; is it not time that the same be done with regard to Members of Parliament engaging in business negotiations in foreign countries? The purity of our Parliamentary politics is of comparatively recent growth, and is a tender plant; it is the product of a social atmosphere and rests largely on unwritten conventions. But there is something peculiar about many of our political and social conventions—they are not shipped "east of Suez," and not even across the Straits of Dover. (Watch, e.g., certain of our plus-four youths in Paris, or even at Basle railway station on their way to some winter resort! They are released from that discipline which pervades our home atmosphere and give full expression to the relief they feel; the gentleman seems to have been "scratched" and the bouncer hollers.) We can say without undue self-righteousness that outside this island moral codes are considerably lower than with us; the more important therefore does it seem that we, and especially our acknowledged representatives, should not allow ourselves or the country as a whole to appear in any way on levels lower than those to which we keep at home.

One last remark which applies to Britons at large: the average British visitor abroad, having eaten the salt of foreign hosts, feels bound to them by some deep, invisible ties. Men and women who could not be won over by any financial considerations succumb unwittingly to propaganda "by meal and motor-car." They feel that it would be well-nigh "caddish" in them not to espouse the cause and forward the schemes of people by whom they have been "so well received." They eat and drink and rise up and go away, having for "bread and pottage of lentils" sold (at least in their own feeling) their moral freedom to hold and express an unbiased judgment on rights and wrongs in international affairs. Indeed, anyone who holds such views of his, or her, post-prandial obligations, should avoid partaking of hospitality when visiting foreign countries.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

YOUTH AND WAR

SIR,—Although I belong to "the respectable, stupid middle-class" whose "constipated minds" Mr. K. E. Barlow deplores in his article "Youth and War," I agree with his conclusions: going to war should be made more awkward, education about war should be better. But I disagree with his analysis of the mind of youth. It is certainly not true of those now in the later twenties that their "convictions as to war are the products of thought, not of emotions; they are intellectual, not personal." For the child over twelve in 1914, and surely for many even younger, war came like an evil sickness into the pleasant house of life and rotted the heart out of happiness. And four years of childhood is a longer time than four years of maturity. There must be tens of thousands of people in this country who, though they were too young to take any part in the war, grew up into convictions about it which were very far from being purely intellectual.

But, in spite of that, the "enthusiasm, organization, proselytizing" which Mr. Barlow calls the offspring of feeling, are very little in evidence. The attitude of this generation is stranger and less explicable than he makes out, and the roots of its inaction go deeper. We might have learnt nothing and remembered nothing of the last war for all that we are doing to prevent the next. Anything that is being done is the work of the older generations.

Why is this, if we lack neither horror at the idea of war nor conviction of its wastefulness? Partly, I think, we are suffering from a listlessness for which the war itself is responsible. If the children of a nation are frightened and underfed for four years, twenty or thirty years may pass before the generations grow to full strength again, and then, indeed, the reality of war may be forgotten, and the unclear spirit, seizing his opportunity, will return with seven other spirits more wicked than himself. Such a comprehensive poison is war, vitalizing even in the germ the reaction that should follow it.

But a still deeper reason for our inaction. We are paralyzed by wisdom—of a sort. Our contemporaries in Germany are not so wise, and therefore, although they suffered far more as children, they are less impotent. They are at present profoundly interested in the question of the War Guilt, and ready with better proofs of Germany's innocence than the average young Englishman can refute. That is the frame of mind which turns easily to "enthusiasm, organization, proselytizing," which generates war, which might cure us of war. But we are not interested in proving England innocent, not even interested in proving Germany guilty, because the problem of the War Guilt seems to us a matter so vast and abstruse, sown in the earth so long before our time, ripe for judgment so long after.

This generation has far too wide an outlook. It looks back to the Ice Age that passed, and on to the cooling of the sun, and the Ice Age that will not pass, and its "noisy years seem moments in the being of the Eternal Silence." What does the Eternal Silence care if it is noise of war or of the harvesters returning with their sheaves? And how, with our imperfect knowledge of human nature and still more imperfect means of controlling it can we set about the curing of a disease far older than the oldest army in the world?

Wisdom of this sort has no commerce with action. Its value is purely evasive. We are faced with the obligation of handing on a civilization which was already beyond our mending when we inherited it, and our feet are shod with such questions to be swift to escape from the curses of those about to be born.—Yours, &c.,

LYN LLOYD IRVINE.

20, Albany Mansions,
Albert Bridge Road, S.W.11.

THE HOME SECRETARY AND THE COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL

SIR,—I am led by some of the comments which have appeared during the week in the daily Press, on the recent reprieves in the Brighton murder case, to offer some observations on the true position of the Home Secretary in the matter of the commutation of capital sentences after a decision of the Court of Criminal Appeal dismissing an appeal against conviction.

The Court of Criminal Appeal can only interfere with a conviction where it is of opinion that the verdict of the jury was unreasonable, or cannot be supported having regard to the evidence, or should be set aside on the ground of a wrong decision of any question of law, or that on any other ground there was a miscarriage of justice. In any other case it must dismiss the appeal.

The Home Secretary, in the performance of his functions as the constitutional adviser of the Sovereign, in the exercise of the prerogative (as expressly reserved by the Act of Parliament creating the Court of Criminal Appeal), is not so restricted in his action. He can give effect to a doubt felt by him as to guilt, or degree of guilt, or as to the accuracy or truthfulness of evidence believed and acted upon by the jury notwithstanding that the jury may have considered and rejected such doubt, and this without being clearly unreasonable in so doing. He may come into possession of confidential information, or evidence not amounting to technically legal evidence, which may lead him to the conclusion that it would not be safe to carry out the penalty of death. There may be other considerations, such as the fact that the murder is what is termed "constructive murder"—that is to say, murder without actual intention, but intention only legally presumed from the felonious circumstances under which the death occurred or was caused. Or there may be other reasons for not carrying out the death penalty, which the Home Secretary may in his responsible opinion consider sufficient, apart from mitigating circumstances or considerations of mercy.

The exercise by the Home Secretary of these anxious and responsible functions should be—and is legally—entirely unfettered by any judgment of the Court of Appeal, and it is extremely desirable that it should remain so. It is therefore also desirable that the Court of Criminal Appeal should, in the course of its judgment, avoid saying anything which may be calculated to prejudice or influence or make difficult the action of the Home Secretary. This principle was, at all events in the earlier days of the Court of Criminal Appeal, scrupulously adhered to. But, in the humble opinion of the writer, this has not been in later years so patent, and there is therefore a danger, should the Home Secretary in his action seem to run counter to a judgment of the Court of Appeal, that the public may think that the former is setting his views against the considered judgment of that Court, and is acting on insufficient or sentimental grounds, or is actuated by weakness. The true position is thus apt to be obscured.

For this reason, if for no other, a conscientious decision on the part of the Home Secretary cannot but be approved by all who desire to see the maintenance of what was intended when the Court of Criminal Appeal was established. A perusal is well worth while to-day of the very interesting debate which took place in the House of Commons in 1907, when the Act creating the Court of Criminal Appeal was passed, and in particular the speech made by Lord Gladstone (then Mr. Gladstone), the Home Secretary at the time, on the functions, position and practice of the Home Secretary. Also of some of the other speeches made on the motion for the second reading of the Bill. There was a formidable body of opinion at the time against the desirability of the measure, and fears were expressed that juries might feel their responsibility lessened by the establishment of a Court of Appeal, even with the restricted powers as to questions of fact. But I think that time has shown that the measure is a good one, provided always that the limitations of the Court as regards questions of fact are well understood, and the powers of the Home Secretary are left intact and unfettered.—Yours, &c.,

W. H. STOKER.

The Athenæum, Pall Mall, S.W.
August 18th, 1928.

THE RHINELAND OCCUPATION

SIR,—I am glad that in Saturday's issue you emphasize the incompatibility of the continuance of the Occupation of the Rhineland with a sincere acceptance of the Locarno policy.

Germany has long felt aggrieved at what she considers a breach of faith on the part of the Allies in not reducing their armaments in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant, which reads thus: "The Members of the League recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety. . . ." By Article 160 of the Versailles Treaty, "the total number of effectives in the Army of the States constituting Germany must not exceed 100,000 men." Obviously if 100,000 were sufficient for Germany the armaments of other countries accepting the Covenant fell to be reduced proportionately. This was constantly pointed out to me during a few weeks spent recently in various parts of Germany.

But I found the people of all classes still more incensed at the failure to evacuate the Rhineland in spite of all the more or less formal promises which followed the acceptance of the Dawes plan, the entry into the League of Nations, the Thoiry conversations and the Locarno Treaty. Since I left, the proposed co-operation of British cavalry in the manoeuvres of the French Army of Occupation and the Anglo-French Agreement on Naval Policy have been arranged, so the state of feeling has doubtless become still more embittered—a most regrettable preliminary to the coming meeting at Paris to sign the Kellogg Pact. If only the French would signalize the signing by *un beau geste*!—Yours, &c.,

D. M. STEVENSON.

Glasgow.

August 20th, 1928.

THE SAFEGUARDING OF STEEL

SIR,—Dr. Earp's letter challenges Free Traders to give him a "conclusive answer." We can but try!

Though it may be certain that every additional ton of steel manufactured here means so much more coal used, &c., &c., it does not follow that if by safeguarding we stop a ton of Continental steel entering the country, it will be replaced by a ton or even half a ton of British steel.

That is the first fallacy on which the case for safeguarding is built.

Take as an illustration a Sheet Rolling Mill. The maker to-day is practically dependent on Continental bars. Cut off that source of supply and make him base his prices on the dearer British article and you have two results:—

1. The advance in prices immediately reduces his sales and his demand for steel.
2. In course of time when the necessary rolling machinery has been put down on the Continent he will meet in the world's markets the competition as a finished article of the very bars he used to purchase, so that in the absence of an increase in the world's demand he will be practically forced out of business.

Hence the final result will be that what is now a moderately prosperous industry will be ruined and on the other hand the "coal and steel" position will be much about where it was.

On a small scale this is exactly what has happened in the Tinsplate Industry during the last few years, and manufacturers are even now reducing output in an endeavour to maintain prices at a remunerative level whilst other countries are expanding their outputs rapidly.

The difficulty with steel is that the great bulk has to be exported in one form or another, and one vital question safeguarding leaves unanswered is how and where the output is to be sold at prices above the world level. Till that question is answered satisfactorily we are justified in describing it as, in essence, a proposal to rob Peter to pay Paul, with the difference that whilst Peter would lose good solid gold, Paul would only receive paper money.—Yours, &c.,

LEONARD WALLS.

52, Wellesley Road, Harrow, Middlesex.
August 17th, 1928.

PROCURING MISCARRIAGE AND CRIME

SIR,—Although there is no letter to-day commenting upon the one by Mr. G. L. Bruce in your issue of July 28th, many of your readers may like to hear more about its subject. An Act of 1861 codified the previous law in this country on the procuring of miscarriage. It was, however, not quite clear. Moreover, doctors could not, I think, have been at all inclined to do the operation until antiseptic surgery arrived. About 1897, the Royal College of Physicians took counsel's opinion on the law, which opinion was that the law did not forbid the operation when it was necessary in order to save the woman's life. But to do it on any other consideration was a felony, and a reputable doctor always guarded himself by calling in a colleague.

At the 1926 annual meeting of the British Medical Association, Dr. T. W. Eden opened a discussion on the indications for terminating a pregnancy before the viability of the child. In the course of his paper he told how a barrister's healthy wife so countered him with her logical argument that he called in a very eminent consultant, who decided in the woman's favour. This paper, and the discussion on it, led to a crowded joint meeting on January 21st, 1927, of the Medico-Legal Society and the Section of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the Royal Society of Medicine. The consensus of opinion among the medical and legal speakers was that it should still be illegal to do the operation except to save a diseased woman from a very considerable risk of death or of serious illness.

Mr. Justice Salter, the Chairman, said, in the course of his concluding speech:—

"What is and what ought to be the law with regard to artificially procuring abortion? Every doctor desires to be within the law, and desires the law to be so framed that his duties as a citizen may never conflict with the duties of his profession. Taylor, in his 'Medical Jurisprudence,' has a section headed 'Justifiable abortion,' but lays it down that there is no such thing as abortion justified in law, and the editor of the latest edition of that work has retained that opinion. It seems to me that the Legislature, in forbidding the unlawful use of instruments or drugs, implied that there was such a thing as lawful use. The position of Dr. Fairbairn (the opener of the discussion) is that either the law allows, or should be amended to allow, abortion in every case where, after all due examination, delay, and inquiry it is the considered opinion of the medical man that the operation is absolutely necessary to save the life of the mother or to prevent grave injury to her health. The mother's life, certainly; the mother's health, in the grave sense of the word, yes; and there is a third class where it is a question of the future health of the child. Suppose it became clear during the pregnancy that one or other parent was afflicted with some disease very commonly inherited, would there be medical justification for abortion? I should regard that as a very difficult case indeed. Then there are non-medical cases in which it is sought to justify abortion on such grounds as that the child will be unwelcome or expensive, that pregnancy will interfere with the mother's social amusements, that abortion will be a means of avoiding disgrace, or—stronger in its appeal than any of these—that the woman has been the victim of rape. Two speakers have urged that the prospective mother is the mistress of the situation. I certainly agree that she should have more say than anyone else. But that abortion should be lawful in any case in which the mother desires it or even consents to it seems to me to be going too far. Here is a living thing, approaching the moment of birth, having in many senses a separate existence already, and the mother is at liberty, if she pleases, to have its life ended. After it is born is she still to have the right, and, if not, why not? The ethics of this question cannot be considered without bearing in mind the close connection which there always is between abortion and infanticide."

Earl Russell and Dr. Beresford Kingsford had indicated the view, which I voiced at the first meeting and applauded at the second one—that, provided the child was not yet viable, the mother's wish should decide the question.

The issue may be largely altered by recent discoveries as to the effect of certain endocrine gland extracts. Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane was probably alluding to these when he made this statement in "Some More Medical Views on Birth Control" (Cecil Palmer) a few months ago: "It is not difficult to realize what will be the result of the discovery of a certain preventative, or of an absolutely reliable abortifacient free from risk to life, which shall be readily accessible to the masses. It is highly probable that the discovery of one or both is likely to occur at any time, if, indeed, the latter is not already known to a few."—Yours, &c.,

B. DUNLOP, M.B.

BIRTH CONTROL AND MISCARRIAGE

SIR,—Your correspondent is mistaken in stating that a doctor who induces abortion for urgent medical reasons is contravening the law, though the wise practitioner invariably covers himself by a second opinion and the presence of another qualified man or woman. The real danger lies with the people who see no "sound moral distinction between contraception and abortion," and who, therefore, like the doctor quoted, warn their patient that another child will mean death, and then stand sanctimoniously aside and watch her die. Why not tell her how to avoid conceiving? There is a marked difference in the physical effects of abortion and contraception, of taking life and of preventing its inception. Doctors who have studied the subject—as distinct from those whose religion forbids the use of the brains God gave them—agree on the harmlessness of certain contraceptives. Abortion, even under the best conditions, is a risky business, and, attempted as it constantly is by ignorant and dirty people, is a public menace. And at present, when adequate contraceptive advice is lacking, criminal abortion is admittedly so prevalent that it is *practically impossible for a working-woman to obtain medical attention even for an innocent miscarriage*, so terrified are the big hospitals and the general practitioner of being mixed up in a possibly shady case. We hope that the present Commission on Maternal Mortality will inquire how many unattended miscarriages have been endured by the women who finally die in childbirth.—Yours, &c.,

CHARIS U. FRANKENBURG.

Upton Priory, Macclesfield.

August 1st, 1928.

THE YOUNG OFFENDER

SIR,—Many people who attended the Liberal Summer School were glad that a session was given up to the subject of the Juvenile Offender, especially as the foundation of the reforms that have already been brought about was laid by Sir Herbert Samuel.

Considering that the report of the Departmental Committee is entirely directed towards the one opinion that the whole object should be to keep children and young persons out of prison and that so few remand homes are at present available in this country, it is surprising that so little stress is put in the report upon the need for homes for the purpose of housing young people who are awaiting the completion of their trial, i.e., those whose offence is not yet proved, but whose case is put back for further inquiry concerning the facts. The one aspect, and it is quite the most important, which is almost invariably overlooked in any discussion is that in this class of remand, judgment in the case is still suspended, and that at the moment of remand the accused is still innocent in the eyes of the law: and there is no justification for assuming that it does not matter whether they are put with people who have been actually convicted of an offence.

To all who are interested and who have studied the report it must be clear that "remand" as we understand it is scarcely touched. The Committee recommend the observation system as used in Belgium—but appear to have confused the terms "remand" and "observation." The Belgian system is purely for the observation of all cases of Juvenile Offenders in that country *after* conviction, and the Centre is not used for detention until an offence has been proved. That the average stay of a child in the Centre is three months is ample evidence that here is no remand home, as remand can only be a matter of days. The term "Central Remand Homes or Observation Centres" is repeatedly used in the report, however, and in its context leads to unnecessary confusion. Both the Probation Officers and the Magistrates Associations in their meetings since the publication of the report have passed resolutions affirming their belief that local remand homes in addition to the suggested Observation Centres should be established, and while any system of observation would mark a great advance, it would not remove the necessity for providing an uncontaminated atmosphere in which all children and young persons should await the completion of the hearing which is to establish their innocence or culpability.—Yours, &c.,

MAUD GATES.

12, Brundretts Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

"DIFFERENT TO . . ."

SIR,—Instead of wrangling about the rightness or wrongness of *different to* (which anybody with common sense is quite capable of doing), I think it would be more to the purpose if our learned pundits were to investigate the origin of that much maligned combination which has been used by our best classical authors, and which I, for one, confess to using habitually when not on my guard. In fact, whether "right" or "wrong," I think we may regard it as time-honoured, and it would be interesting to know how it came to be used. I suggest that it may have been originally used elliptically, with the word "compared" understood, *different (compared) to*. If that is the case, it should not be lightly rejected in the name of pedantry.

I believe many people condemn *averse to*, which I am conscious of using habitually. I wonder it has not yet occurred to anybody to object to *depend* or *dependent upon*.—Yours, &c.,

E. J. TRECHMANN, M.A., Ph.D.
ONCE A GRAMMARIAN.

August 12th, 1928.

ROBERT BURNS

A FEW days ago someone gave £400 for a letter from Burns to his brother, and so far as it was a letter addressed to the poet's brother, who can say that it was not worth the money, as money is now reckoned by those who have it?

Yet had it been almost any one of the letters included in the selection before us,* personally, and save to sell again, we would not have given a penny for it, for Burns had two styles of conducting what Miss Hannah More would have called his Epistolary Correspondence.

When the poet was writing to his father, his brother, his wife, or to friends he had known in his early days, his style was in all respects commendable—honest, direct, and with occasional flashes of wit and humour, but when he is writing to those who may be called his Edinburgh friends, the noblemen, gentlemen, and ladies whose acquaintance he made in that "East windy, West Endy" city, his style becomes painful beyond expression.

This, of course, is not Mr. Brimley Johnson's fault, though I cannot think the editor of this volume has added to the debt of gratitude we already owe him for so many of his labours.

There is no better "cutter-down" than Mr. Johnson. Give him such stout, sturdy books as Mrs. Delaney's six volumes of Autobiography and Correspondence, and arm him with a really useful pair of scissors and tell him to cut them down to two, and Mr. Johnson will discharge the task with excellent judgment and an unflinching courage.

When we call to mind what this editor has already done for us in this very direction (and a list of some of his feats of compression will be found in the advertisement column appended to the present volume), it seems shabby to look askance at this last of his meritorious actions.

But truth will out even in a review, and much as we could wish it otherwise, for our love of Burns and our admiration for some of his letters hardly stops short this side of idolatry, we cannot believe that this selection can do his memory anything but injury.

Lest, however, we should be accused of either hastiness or fancifulness, extracts must be given:—

"You cannot imagine, Clarinda (I like the idea of Arcadian names in a commerce of this kind), how much store I have set by the hopes of your future friendship. I don't know if you have a just idea of my character, but I wish you to see me *as I am*. I am, as most people of my trade are, a strange will-o'-wisp being—the victim too frequently of much imprudence and many follies.

My great constituent elements are pride and passion. The first I have endeavoured to humanize into integrity and honour—the last makes me a devotee of the warmest degree of enthusiasm, in love, religion, or friendship; either of them or altogether as I happen to be inspired. 'Tis true, I never saw you but once, but how much acquaintance did I form with you that once! Do not think I flatter you, or have a design upon you, Clarinda: I have too much pride for the one, and too little cold contrivance for the other; but of all God's creatures I ever could approach in the beaten way of acquaintance, you struck me with the deepest, the strongest, the most permanent impression. I say the most permanent, because I know myself well, and how far I can promise either on my prepossessions or powers. Why are you unhappy?—and why are so many of our fellow-creatures, unworthy to belong to the same species with you, blest with all they can wish? You have a hand all-benevolent to give,—why were you denied the pleasure? You have a heart formed, gloriously formed, for all the most refined luxuries of love,—why was that heart ever wrung? O Clarinda! shall we not meet in a state, some yet unknown state of being, where the lavish hand of Plenty shall minister to the highest wish of Benevolence, and where the chill north-wind of Prudence shall never blow over the flowery fields of enjoyment? If we do not, man was made in vain! I deserved most of the unhappy hours that have lingered over my head; they were the wages of my labour. But what unprovoked demon, malignant as hell, stole upon the confidence of untrusting, busy fate, and dashed your cup of life with undeserved sorrow?

"Let me know how long your stay will be out of town; I shall count the hours till you inform me of your return. Cursed etiquette forbids your seeing me just now; and so soon as I can walk I must bid Edinburgh adieu. Lord, why was I born to see misery which I cannot relieve, and to meet with friends whom I can't enjoy. I look back with the pang of unavailing avarice on my loss in not knowing you sooner. All last winter—these three months past—what luxury of intercourse I have not lost! Perhaps, though, 'twas better for my peace. You see I am either above, or incapable of, dissimulation. I believe it is want of that particular genius. I despise design, because I want either coolness or wisdom to be capable of it. I am interrupted. Adieu! my dear Clarinda!"

"SYLVANDER."

"Friday Evening, [December 28th]."

We had marked other passages to justify our expression of opinion, but when it comes to the point cannot bring ourselves to transcribe them. Why, we ask, are such things included in a "Selection" of letters written by a man who not only was a great poet but when not playing the fool with himself was a master of as good and sensible a prose style as any poet ever wrote, and most great poets have possessed excellent prose styles.

If it be asked how came it about that such a man as Burns could ever have taken up with such a way of writing, we are disposed to think (allowing for other reasons) that having in the early days of the budding of his tremendous genius fallen under the influence of Sterne, in his later days, when he took, as so many poets have done, before and since, to "philandering," he imagined he could imitate his master. But the Prebendary of York, though one of the most delightful and permanently enjoyable of authors, is the very worst to imitate. In fact it cannot be done. Only Sterne could plagiarize himself. We must not grudge Burns the delight he must have had in reading "Tristram Shandy" and the "Sentimental Journey," yet it would have been well if he had been confined to Shenstone and the "Man of Feeling."

As a poet Burns had a good fortune (if indeed it is good fortune for a good poet to be popular from the first day of publication) that seldom falls to the lot of great poets.

When reduced by the oppression of culminating misfortunes almost to despair, and on the eve of emigration to Jamaica—being then well under thirty, Burns, acting it

* "The Letters of Robert Burns." Selected, with an Introduction, by R. Brimley Johnson. (Lane. 6s.)

may be on the advice of rustic friends, determined, with their aid, to publish by subscription a volume which might, who knows? even in the hour of his extremity, gratify the wish that had long "heaved" his breast.

"That I for poor Auld Scotland's sake
Some usefu' plan or beuk could make
Or sing a sang at least."

Thus came into the world in 1786 that Kilmarnock Edition of Poems, "chiefly in the Scottish dialect," which is now the pride of the rich (for £2,000 will not procure you a copy) and the envy of the poor book collector.

From the first the book was, from the literary point of view, an astounding success. Six hundred copies were speedily in circulation, and were read so eagerly by rich and poor that only some half-dozen copies of this first edition are now known to be in existence. Like Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" they were worn out. A second edition, the "Edinburgh" Edition of 1787, consisting of 2,800 copies followed, and was soon exhausted, and is now also a rare book.

We are assured on good authority that the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright was for the first time in its history stirred to its depths by these publications, and that ploughboys, and farm hinds, and hired maidservants bewailed the poverty that forbade the purchase of rhymes and songs, with some of which they were already acquainted.

How different was the fate that some thirty years later was to be the doom of Keats in the cold, unfeeling atmosphere of London!

Financially, neither edition made the fortune of the poet, who had parted with the copyright. Authors had not then become men of business.

Burns, being a poet of world-wide fame as well as the poet *par excellence* of Scotland, the poet of Love, both lawful and unlawful, of a pathos many have found almost unbearable, of wit, humour, and deadly sarcasm, has naturally attracted at home and abroad a vast amount of notice. His memory has been drunk on tens of thousands of occasions in every kind of company and with too copious libations out of cups that undeniably *do* inebriate. He has been extolled to the skies, perhaps too exuberantly, and moralized over far too abundantly. That some of this moralizing proceeded from genuine piety, true wisdom, and real compassion is true enough, but that too much of it was conventional and unreal cant is also obvious. Very little of the criticism to which Burns has been subjected can to-day be read throughout with pleasure. Even Carlyle's review of Lockhart's Life of the poet, first printed in 1828, full of understanding and deep sympathy as it could not fail to be, now in 1928, occasionally strikes a jarring because a falsetto note.

In very recent years the best essay on Burns is, in our opinion, to be found in Sir Walter Raleigh's volume, entitled "Some Authors" (The Oxford Press, 1923). It is a fine, outspoken, courageous bit of work, but we can here do no more than advise those who have not studied it to repair that error.

Another searching bit of true criticism may be read in the first volume of the "Collected Essays" of the late much-lamented W. P. Ker (Macmillan, 1925). This essay is entitled "The Politics of Burns," and amongst many things of interest reprints the whole of a long letter from Burns, written in 1788, to the editor of a newspaper. In our opinion, anyone who has ever read any of Burns's philandering letters to silly women ought, in bare justice to a great poet, to read this letter and note the difference. It is a pity it is not to be found included in Mr. Johnson's Selection, and yet were it there it would be out of place.

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

VIDTH AND VISMOM

THERE is, or was, a small inn in Buckinghamshire standing on one of the highest ridges of the Chilterns, in my day famous as a good pull up for walkers. It may, for all I know, be still unaltered from those evenings when we used to toast our feet at its great wood fires, eat our fried chops in the tap-room, and sleep in its capacious beds, which were warmed by hot bricks wrapped up in a newspaper. During a week-end's walking out of London it was an ideal stopping place. It was simple and it was cheap—and it was said that on a fine, clear morning you could see the towers of Oxford from its doorstep. We never did see them, strain our eyes as we would, but inside the inn there was an example of divine architecture which was truly amazing and which could be seen at any time. This was our landlord—Mr. Biggs.

Mr. Albert Edward Biggs had no neck and not much in the way of legs. He had a face and what sculptors call a torso, which I understand, perhaps wrongly, to be that part of the body between the collar bone and the groin. His face was large and round, his cheeks were pendulous, his eyes were small and watery—but his body was enormous, in girth far exceeding the eighteen-gallon barrels from which he had once drawn his beer, a task now relinquished to a young potman.

For the great size of Mr. Biggs had made him necessarily static in his habits. He seldom moved from his saddle-back chair in the tap-room except to make a measured progress to his meals in the kitchen where (as in the picture of the famous Mr. Lambert) a semi-circle had been cut out of the table so that he could more easily reach his plate. His active life was over. No more was it possible for him to assist in the pleasant bustle of his inn or spend happy hours in his kitchen garden. He had become a mass of scarcely movable tissue, and his only pleasure was in listening to the humble adventures of the small farmers and peasants who were his regular customers or the chatter of us more sophisticated Cockneys who arrived with packs on our backs.

Here, we said, in our ignorance, is the physical result of a life of rustic sloth and unperturbed prosperity. Here in this beauty spot of the home counties, Mr. Biggs has lived since he can remember, eating great quantities of pickled pork and dumplings, and every day for the past fifty years drinking quart after quart of his own good beer. His travels have been limited to an occasional drive to Aylesbury or Rickmansworth. No worry or anxiety has darkened his path. He has just been allowed by an indulgent God to live and grow fat in the best of all possible worlds from which he will one day be mercifully removed by a stroke of apoplexy.

But the danger of judging by appearances was never so clearly demonstrated as it was in the case of Albert Biggs. He was the most thorough-paced fraud in the disguise of dull-witted obesity, the most cunning old fox who ever led loquacity to its doom, that it has ever been my pleasure to meet. To approach the truth of his history we were obliged to go through a kind of preliminary roasting by his intimates, which we discovered afterwards to be a ritual to which all strangers were subjected.

One of the shrewdest warnings on the subject of chance acquaintance and its dangers was the remark of a gregarious old scoundrel who had spent his life in the taverns of the world. "You can always tell," he said, "the man who knows less than yourself, but it is sometimes extremely difficult to detect the man who knows more." It is a warning which all those who have the habit of talking to strangers in hotels or railway trains or on the roadside would do well always to keep before them.

Had it been imparted to me earlier it would have saved me much humiliation. It would have saved me, for instance, from jumping to too ready a conclusion about the early life of Mr. Albert Biggs.

Mr. Biggs found it difficult to articulate. His voice was husky and produced from some swollen cavern in his interior. He made as little use of it as possible, and never again did I hear him talk so much as he did in the memorable conversation which follows:—

"Come from London, gentlemen?" asked a friendly little man, who turned out afterwards to be the postmaster.

We admitted that we did so.

"Mr. Biggs, our landlord, knows London," he continued, "don't you, Albert?"

"And a good few as is still in it," said Mr. Biggs, cryptically.

"Such as Lord Lonsdale," suggested the postmaster.

Mr. Biggs waved aside the impeachment as too obvious to need contradiction.

"A good few as is in it," he repeated, "and a good few as will never be in it again."

"Such as Gladstone," insinuated the postmaster.

"Such as Gladstone," nodded Mr. Biggs.

"Yes, gentlemen," said Mr. Biggs's showman, "you wouldn't think to see an old country fellow like our landlord what a powerful lot he knows about London, an old chap like him. Born here, weren't you, Albert?"

"In this house—twelve in family."

"And yet I daresay if you were to tell him where you lived in London Mr. Biggs could tell you a thing or two about it—couldn't you, Albert?"

"I'd try," he assented civilly.

We smiled a little incredulously, but I said, of course we had no objection, and I, for one, lived in Oakley Street, Chelsea.

"Which side," asked Mr. Biggs, "East or West?"

"East," I replied.

"Then your house, sir," said Mr. Biggs, "has an odd number."

I said he had guessed right first time, and then he asked me: "Perhaps you'd tell me, sir, how far it is from the King's Road?"

"About a hundred yards down," I told him.

"Then I shouldn't be far out, sir, if I was to say it was about Number 25."

This was so truly astonishing and so astonishingly true that I wondered for a moment if I could have dropped an envelope addressed to me.

But the next few minutes were to show that Mr. Biggs's knowledge of London was indeed extensive and peculiar.

"And where may your gentleman friend live?" asked the postmaster.

"I live in a flat near West Kensington Station," said my companion.

"Would that be Conan Mansions?" asked Mr. Biggs.

"It is indeed," said my friend, as stupefied as myself.

"Nice view over the Earl's Court Exhibition," said the old man, "and very 'andy for the 'Three Kings.'"

"You must have lived there," I said feebly.

"No," said Mr. Biggs, "I never lived in Chelsea, nor yet in West Kensington, which is, strictly speaking, Fulham, and Fulham it is on election days, as you very well know, sir. No, gentlemen, I was born in this house—but I has a remarkable memory for the names of streets and the numbers of houses."

"And those that lived in them," said his prompter.

"Yes," said Mr. Biggs.

"Such as Marie Lloyd?"

"And Charles Bradlaugh, and Fred Archer, and Mr. Montefiore, and Tom Sayers, and Sir 'Enery Irving, and Miss Lottie Collins. Well, if they didn't have no regular houses some of them—I could tell you pretty much where they generally dossed."

This at least removed the suspicion that our Falstaffian host had spent his leisure hours studying a Post Office directory.

"But there must be some explanation," I exclaimed, addressing Mr. Biggs, "of how you came by all this detailed knowledge."

"There is," interjected the postmaster, "and it's strange how few of you gentlemen ever tumble to it. Perhaps it's his looks as deceives you. He does look an out-and-out old countryman, don't he? Born in this house, as he said—and going to die here, aren't you, Albert? But nobody said he'd lived here all his life. Oh no, Mr. Biggs has lived a tidy bit in London."

"Yes, but that doesn't explain his extraordinary knowledge of Chelsea and West Kensington."

"It would be the same if it had been Hampstead or Holloway. I think you'd better tell the gentlemen, Albert."

Mr. Biggs gurgled or chuckled—and took a fortifying swig from his tankard.

"It's easy," he said, "dead easy. All you has to do is to drive a hansom cab all day and most of the night for thirty years. The box-seat of a hansom cab, gents, is a capital place to get to know things."

J. B. STERNDALÉ BENNETT.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL!" (the new Barry Jackson at the Court Theatre) is half a noggin of Barrie in a good gallon of tepid water. It seemed to me one of the vilest plays I had ever seen, whether it was affecting farce or sentimentality. The humour was as crude as the dialogue was stale, and one was on occasion carried back into all the cheery bad taste of what one had hoped to be a vanished age. A middle-aged woman making jokes about the ruin of her figure was the staple joke: the philosophy is the consoling one that our wives are so frightfully clever that we can be as foolish as we like with impunity. Naturally the play never descended to the flats of credibility for a single instant. The actors can hardly be blamed for not having made much of their material. Presumably Sir Barry Jackson hopes the play will run for five years. There is an off chance he may be right. But a faint belief in the intelligence of the human race leads one to hope that he may be mistaken.

The home of the Brontës being now the "Haworth Parsonage Museum," I went in at the black stone gateway in the garden wall, and walked up the path to the front door. Haworth Rectory is a plain-looking house of dark grey stone, with large windows; and although the surroundings—the church and graveyard—probably gave a poorer impression in the Brontës' time, it seems to me nonsense to call the parsonage a gloomy dwelling. The garden, with its sheltering trees and lawn shaped like a bell, is pretty, and the house inside is delightful. Before the door stood an imposing figure: this was a grand commissioner, who, although still new to the job, seemed to feel his own importance. He let us into the "Hall." The stone staircase goes up opposite the door under a moulded arch; and the door of "Mr. Brontë's Study"—each room is neatly labelled by the Brontë Society—is on the right; and the "Parlour" door, on the left. Both these rooms are nearly square, but lofty. The corresponding bedrooms above are charming, bright rooms. The Brontë sisters must have had a happy time when they were all together; and paced around in the parlour, their minds full of characters and of ambition. The horrors of "Wuthering 'ights," as they call it in Yorkshire, come of too much imagination; and not of the rain-stained stone of which the Rectory is built.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, August 25th.—

Haslemere Festival, Dances and Festive Music, 8.

Sunday, August 26th.—

Peace Pact Services in the Free Churches.

Monday, August 27th.—

Signature of the Kellogg Pact, Paris.

Films: "The Fugitive Lover" and "The City of Pleasure," by Arnold Bennett, Marble Arch Pavilion. Haslemere Festival, Bach Concert, 8.

Tuesday, August 28th.—
Haslemere Festival, French Concert, 8.
Wednesday, August 29th.—
Haslemere Festival, Purcell Concert, 3.
A Conversation between Mr. Gerald Heard and Mr. Francis Birrell on the Wireless, 9.15.
Thursday, August 30th.—
Haslemere Festival, Italian and German Music, 8.
Friday, August 31st.—
Haslemere Festival, Concerted Music for Viols, 8.
M. André Maurois on the Wireless, 9.15.
OMICRON.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

THE ATHENÆUM, AUGUST 27TH, 1828.

GERMAN POETRY.

OUR list of successful translators from the German is not numerous, but it includes some of the most illustrious names in modern English literature. The first in order of time, and certainly not the last in order of merit, was Sir Walter Scott's "Götz von Berlichingen." Mr. Taylor's "Nathan the Wise," "Iphigenia in Tauris," and

"Leonora" followed; then came Coleridge's "Wallenstein"; and last, greatest—and, alas! briefest of all—Shelley's "Scenes from Faust." If we except some very meritorious translations which have appeared in BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, we believe there is no other version of a German poet upon which Englishmen can dwell with the slightest satisfaction; and, when we have mentioned Mr. Carlyle's "Wilhelm Meister," and the first volume of "Niebuhr's History," by Mr. Hare and Mr. Thirlwall, the prose catalogue will be also complete. And when we consider the kind of treatment which most of these works have received from the public, it is a wonderful homage to German literature that even so many men of genius should have been found to undertake the thankless task. The reputation of the northern minstrel was laid, not in his version of Goethe, but in a collection of Border Ballads. The English "Wallenstein" could not work its way through a single edition, and the periodical critics of the day found it impossible to make up their minds whether the author or the translator was the most contemptible person; and Shelley's "Walpurgisnacht," that wonderful production, which is nothing less than the original scene *transplanted*—like the trees in Sir James Stewart's park—with all its juices and life unimpaired, into another soil and atmosphere—did not attract so much attention as the pseudo-Faust of Lord Leveson Gower!

London Amusements.

MATINEES FOR THE WEEK.

DRURY LANE. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
FORTUNE. Thurs. & Sat., at 2.30.

SHOW BOAT
"MISCHIEF"

LONDON PAVILION. Tues. & Thurs., 2.30. THIS YEAR OF GRACE
NEW SCALA. Wed. & Thurs., 2.30. ITALIAN MARIONETTES.
ROYALTY. Thurs. & Sat., 2.30. BIRD IN HAND.

THEATRES.

ALDWYCH. (Gerrard 2304.) NIGHTLY, at 8.15.
Matinees, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30.
"PLUNDER." A New Farce by Ben Travers.
TOM WALLS, Mary Brough, and RALPH LYNN.

DRURY LANE. (Ger. 2567.) 8.15 precisely. Wed., Sat., 2.30 precisely.

"SHOW BOAT." A New Musical Play.

DUKE OF YORK'S. Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Mon., Thurs., 2.30. (Smoking.)

"MANY HAPPY RETURNS."

MIMI CRAWFORD. MORRIS HARVEY.

HERB. WILLIAMS, "The Funniest Man in the World."

FORTUNE. (Regent 1307.) "MISCHIEF."

A New Comedy by Ben Travers.

Allan Jeayes, Edmond Breon, and YVONNE ARNAUD.

Nightly, at 8.30. Matinees, Thursday & Saturday, at 2.30.

HIPPODROME, London. Evenings, at 8.15. Gerrard 0650.

MATINEES, WEDS., THURS. & SATS., at 2.30.

"THAT'S A GOOD GIRL."

A MUSICAL COMEDY.

KINGSWAY. (Holb. 4032.) Nightly, 8.15. Mats., Wed., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.

JEAN CADELL in

LAST WEEKS. "MARIGOLD." (Now in its 2nd year.) LAST WEEKS.

LYRIC THEATRE, Hammersmith. EVENINGS, at 8.20.

"SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."

Produced by NIGEL PLAYFAIR.

MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30. Riverside 3012.

NEW SCALA ITALIAN MARIONETTES.

SEVEN WEEKS SEASON.

Evenings 8.15. Mats., Wednesday & Thursday, 2.30.

All seats bookable. Popular Prices. (Mus. 6014.)

THEATRES.

ROYALTY. (Ger. 2690.) EVGS., 8.30. MATS., THURS., & SAT., 2.30.
BARRY JACKSON presents
"BIRD IN HAND."
A New Comedy by JOHN DRINKWATER.

ST. MARTIN'S. (Gerr. 1243 & 3416.) HUGH WAKEFIELD.

"KNIGHT ERRANT." By Eric Forbes Boyd.

Evenings, at 8.40. Matinees, Tuesday and Friday, at 2.30.

SAVOY Evenings, 8.30. Matinees, Wednesday & Thursday, 2.30.

"YOUNG WOODLEY."

FRANK LAWTON. KATHLEEN O'REGAN.

WYNDHAM'S (Reg. 3028.) EVENINGS (except Mondays), 8.30.

Matinees, Wed., Fri., Sat., 2.30. LEON M. LION presents

JOHN GALSWORTHY'S "LOYALTIES."

LEON M. LION, ERIC MATORIN, LAWRENCE HANRAY.

CONCERTS.

QUEEN'S HALL. Sole Lessees—Chappell & Co., Ltd.

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION.

PROMENADE B.B.C. CONCERTS.

NIGHTLY, at 8.

SIR HENRY J. WOOD

AND HIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

2s. to 7s. 6d., at Agents, and Chappell's, Queen's Hall.

CINEMAS.

STOLL PICTURE THEATRE, Kingsway. (Holborn 3703.)

DAILY, 2 to 10.45. (SUNDAYS, New Programme, 6 to 10.30.)

August 27th, 28th & 29th. BEBE DANIELS and Richard Arlen in "SHE'S A SHEIK"; MONTE BLUE in "ONE ROUND HOGAN"; Lee and Tesnit, Dancers; Harry Wulson, Juggler.

August 30th, 31st & September 1st. LON CHANEY and Norman Kerry in "THE UNKNOWN"; Ossi Oswalda in "BUYING A WIFE"; John Penna Williams, Bass; Sylvestre, etc.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

THE MAKING OF ENGLISH

"SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLISH," by George Gordon, S.P.E. Tract No. XXIX. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2s. 6d.), is a brilliant little literary essay, in which there is a rare and perfect blend of learning, ratiocination, imagination, and humour. It is only twenty-one pages in length, but it is astonishing how much Professor Gordon is able to pack into those narrow limits. It is a study of the sixteenth-century vocabulary, and in particular of the new words introduced into the literary language by Shakespeare and other Elizabethan writers. He shows that the age was one of linguistic disorder, and, "in its latter years at any rate, a period of a most complete linguistic freedom." The men of that exuberant and restless age were just the people to revel in the disorder and to take full advantage of the freedom. The traffics and discoveries in words and phrases were pursued with the same zest and violence as those over unknown seas and into new continents. "There had never been such a time," says Professor Gordon, "for the bold employers of words, and there never will be again." The Elizabethans used language and words as if they were absolute masters of them: the language was for them an instrument of infinite expansion and elasticity, a word an instrument of incredible flexibility. So they imported words into the English language from abroad and made them English; they revived old words; they invented new words; they stuck words together or they broke them asunder; they made verbs into nouns and nouns into adjectives; they gave new meanings to old words with reckless prodigality. And no writer was more exuberant or more subtle in this linguistic revolution, this creation of a new language, than Shakespeare.

Shakespeare, as Professor Gordon says, was always an experimenter, "making his language as he went along." The number of words and phrases which, according to the dictionaries and the lexicographers, are first found in his writings is astonishing. He may not have been the inventor of them all—indeed, he certainly was not—but even so the number is good proof of his exuberant fertility. Professor Gordon notes some of these expressions which are first known to us in Shakespeare: aerial, auspicious, assassination, bare-faced, bump, castigate, clangor, compact (substantive), compunctious, conflux, control (substantive), countless, critic and critical, crop-ear, denote, disgraceful, distrustful, dog-weary, what the dickens, dwindle, dress (substantive), ensconce, eventful, exposure, fair play, fancy-free, fitful, foppish, foregone conclusion, fretful, gibber, gloomy, gnarl and gnarled, heartsore, heartwhole, hurry, home-keeping, hunch-backed, ill-got, ill-starred, illumine, immediacy, impartial, lacklustre, lapse (verb), laughable, leapfrog, leer, lonely, lower (verb), and so on. Even more remarkable was his power of manipulating the meaning of quite ordinary words and so of coining phrases which have become the common idioms of the English language. Professor Gordon gives an extraordinary list of phrases which are not found in any writer before Shakespeare, e.g., "to cudgel one's brains," "fall to blows," "breathe a word," "lay odds," "back a horse," "wear their hearts on their sleeves." When one examines this list of words and idioms, one begins to

wonder whether the English language existed before Shakespeare, or at least how any writer found the material for expressing his meaning.

* * *

Professor Gordon deals with several other very interesting points, such as the contemporary Elizabethan objections to new words some of which have since become among the most often used in the language, Shakespeare's use of dialect, and his method of derivative word-making. But his whole essay raises some difficult problems with regard to the vitality of literary and colloquial language. The Elizabethan age was, as he says, one of complete linguistic freedom. It was not only Shakespeare, but writers of the second or third class, who made their language as they went along, counting themselves free to coin new words, resuscitate old words, and anglicize foreign words. This Elizabethan attitude towards words and phrases is precisely opposite to that which has exercised so powerful an effect upon French literature, and which existed and still to some extent persists among us—the academic or classical view that, as Professor Gordon puts it, "a language can and should be fixed; that the first duty of a language is to have a polite usage, and that everything else should be for ever impolite; that a civilized language should be commended, like a fashionable club, rather for its power to exclude new-comers than for its willingness to inspect and admit them." Professor Gordon goes on to say that the Elizabethans lived before the vogue of this academic theory of language, "and we, by a similar good fortune, live after its decline." This may be true, but, in that case, as it seems to me, we are singularly incapable of making use of that freedom of which the Elizabethans made themselves masters. I should say that there has never been a time at which the language, whether of the professional writer or of the ordinary man, has had less vitality. I pointed out, the other week, how virile and vital was the language of the seventeenth century, even in the mouths of kings, archbishops, and politicians, long after all these linguistic adventurers about whom Professor Gordon writes were dead. Charles I. and Archbishop Laud used language as if it were alive, as if each word had for them a quite definite meaning. George V. and Archbishop Davidson may be much better at their own jobs of temporal and spiritual rule, but you have only to read a royal or episcopal message to see that to them language is the dead and mechanical thing which it is to the writers of leading articles. Charles I. found it quite natural to write of Parliaments: "They are of the nature of cats; they ever grow cursed with age." A twentieth-century monarch might well have the same thought, but if he did, he would either be completely unable to express it, or he would try to express it in words from which, like much-used coins, all significance has been obliterated. The enervation of language is just as evident in our literature, and even our best writers are linguistically devitalized. The exuberance of a writer like Mr. Joyce is, I think, a proof of rather than an exception to this devitalization. It is often a frantic effort of artificial respiration.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

NEW NOVELS

Mr. Blettsworthy on Rampole Island. By H. G. WELLS. (Benn. 7s. 6d.)

A Quartette of Comedies. By H. G. WELLS. (Benn. 7s. 6d.)

Nor Many Waters. By ALEC WAUGH. (Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d.)

Strangers. By DOROTHY VAN DOREN. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

Money for Nothing. By P. G. WODEHOUSE. (Jenkins. 7s. 6d.)

Who Opened the Door? By THOMAS COBB. (Benn. 7s. 6d.)

The Clue of the Clot. By CHARLES BARRY. (Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.)

How much better, when all is said and done, is Mr. Wells than other people! I put off "Mr. Blettsworthy on Rampole Island" till the end. I had read so many of Mr. Wells's novels and explained to so many people and so completely to my own satisfaction how bad they were, that the idea of having to read another one made me feel quite sick. Still, the fatal hour could be put off no longer. Wearily I stretched out an arm, and, in five minutes, I was reading away for all I was worth. "Mr. Blettsworthy" is a satire on modern life dedicated to the memory of *Candide*, who is coming in for a good deal of recognition just now. But the book is not very like *Candide*, because it is particular, not general. Mr. Blettsworthy: disaster almost certainly occurred to him personally; *Candide* describes what happens to all of us always. Mr. Blettsworthy is a civilized young man whose mercantile and emotional idealisms go badly to ruin at Oxford. He is sent on a sea-voyage, is abandoned on a water-logged boat by the captain, dreams of an extraordinary life among savages, returns to civilization, goes through the war, and is left holding forth in the National Liberal Club "between the owl and the bittern." The savage island is, of course, our own civilization seen from another angle, peopled chiefly by sacred huge giant sloths, or megatheria, who neither die nor engender, but just dominate futilely a superstitious society. They represent the forces of tradition and routine. The satire is at times brilliant and really bites.

It is pretty well written, too. Blettsworthy is floating down the Thames for his ill-omened voyage:—

"The vast, low, crowded realms of the docks on either hand, where houses, inns, and churches appear to float on the water among ships and barges, had gone; where Tilbury's ferry-boat pants across to Gravesend, little yellow lights popped out one by one, and soon multiplied abundantly, and now the great city itself was no more than a fuliginous smear beneath the afterglow, and the flats of Canvey Island were streaming by on one hand and the low, soft hills of Kent upon the other. The blues of twilight deepened towards darkness and Southend's glittering sea-front was in line with us and then turned its arm towards London."

The descriptions of storms at sea and what it feels like to be imprisoned in a ship are first-rate, too. And then how amusing Mr. Wells is about the National Liberal Club:—

"Here this club stands, a banner of progress that somebody has forgotten to carry on. It has said all it had to say, and it sticks here like an old-young megatherium merely because it doesn't know how to get off the stage or where to go if it did... this venerable party, its organization, its party tradition, its Gladstonian tricks and John Bright postures. He dropped his voice and glanced at an adjacent table. 'It's fallen into the hands of the Old Clo' men. They've cleaned it up with naphtha and go about offering the poor old formulae as the latest thing in progressive ideas. Have an olive?'"

It is characteristic of Mr. Wells that he wrote this passage at the moment he was joining the Liberal Party.

There is no reason to say anything about "A Quartette of Comedies," which contains "Kipps," "Love and Mr. Lewisham," "Bealby," and "Mr. Polly." These are four of the most popular novels in English, and their appearance in one commodious volume of eleven hundred thin pages should be widely appreciated.

Mr. Alec Waugh is an old-fashioned writer in the sense that he tells a story. "Nor Many Waters" is an elongated *conte*. But everything works backwards in the modern manner. In a prisoners' camp in Germany, Mr. Waugh meets a frivolous, independent, unattached personality, whose main occupation is working out cross-country journeys in "Bradshaw," and who has one enthusiasm, divorce law reform. You feel he has some secret in the past, and Mr. Waugh eventually extracts his confession. Owing to the

unreformed divorce law he was not able to marry the lady of his heart. The emotional shock has resulted in a psychological mingling of elaborate frivolity and generous idealism. The psychology is adequate and intelligent; the story well told. But the danger in books like "Nor Many Waters" lies in the fact that we have to accept the author's valuation of his own characters: if we do not, the tragedy fails to grip us. It is ultimately, perhaps, a moral as much as a literary problem. Mr. Waugh's heroine seemed to me a disagreeable type of woman, a *demi-vierge*, or, in the language of the streets, a welsher, who is free with her kisses and nothing else. The Victorians used to call such women flirts, and it is a type which one may hope to be dying out. Mr. Waugh admires it; I do not; and this rather spoils the novel for me.

Mrs. van Doren is far more modern in her equipment. Her plot is of no importance compared with the relations of her characters to each other. Sometimes one doubts whether the death of the plot has not caused more diseases than it has cured. But Mrs. van Doren has written a novel far above the average. "Strangers" deals with the married life of three married couples: the criss-cross adulteries of two of them, and the purely internal disasters of the third *ménage*, the only one that really matters. The first four people chatter a great deal about adultery, indulge in it rather furtively and half-heartedly; the third pair goes out for the bull's-eye, and the wife dies partly as a result of her husband's irritability. This third husband, we are given to understand, is a really great writer, and Mrs. van Doren actually makes us believe that she may not be mistaken, in spite of his love of Cornwall, forgivable, perhaps, in an American. His violent egoisms and reactions are often really convincing. Mrs. van Doren thinks that we are all strangers to each, being incapable of understanding each other's language or entering into each other's thoughts. In moments of crisis we are always quite alone. There seems to be a good deal of truth in this, and Mrs. van Doren works the theme into her pattern with considerable grace. This is quite one of the better American volumes.

The next batch of novels present considerably less difficulty. "Money for Nothing" is a new P. G. Wodehouse, and all ultimately depends on whether you like P. G. Wodehouse or not. Personally, I do, though at the end of reading one of his books, I feel subtly degraded and in need of a moral wash and brush up. You are kept constantly chuckling, and the state of mind of a chuckler is, I think, bad. Anyhow, we have all the usual ingredients here. Incoherent or else frivolous young men, very intellectual dogs, golden-hearted girls and the ever-bubbling slang. There is a very amusing skit on certain sorts of detective story woven into "Money for Nothing," and a lively version of the latest sort of dishonest health establishment. A good P. G. Wodehouse, perfectly adapted to railway-carriage reading.

"Who Opened the Door?" is not a very good detective novel. The main circumstances attending the crime are obvious to the reader from the start, and although he may never have deduced exactly what happened, he may console himself with the reflection that the detective fared no better. Detective-Inspector Pardoe had his intuitions to go on and failed to justify them by proof. In fact, he found out absolutely nothing. The circumstances surrounding the crime are eventually explained by the protagonist, who is also the heroine, a device now frequently used by people who embark on a detective story and then can think of nothing to detect.

"The Clue of the Clot" is admittedly more a thriller than a detective story, dealing with the white-slave traffic, dope, the League of Nations, and all the resources of twentieth-century civilization. The police are more brawny than brainy, but by crashing through windows, surrounding remote ill-looking houses and firing quite indiscriminately, they may deceive the more simple-minded reader into thinking that there must be some reason for their abnormal activity. The villain spins the plot, and at the end explains what has happened. Thus the police get promotion, and the curtain goes down on a glut of wedding cake. The "Clue of the Clot" is full-blooded if not intellectual.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

COAL

Coal and Its Conflicts. By JOHN R. RAYNES. (Benn. 21s.)
Coalmining: a European Remedy. By J. R. BELLERBY. (Macmillan. 3s. 6d.)

THESE two books tell a melancholy and perplexing tale. Mr. Raynes records "the frequent disputes between capital and labour in the coalmining industry of Great Britain"; Mr. Bellerby sees the meaning of these disputes in the European coalmining situation and offers some international remedies.

For Mr. Raynes the whole story is a series of battles, complete with leaders and military terminology, between a "politicalized" Miners' Federation and the owners or the State. He writes in the artless manner of an old chronicler, without perspective, but he has lived in his subject, knows and likes the miner, and has written an interesting book of some value as a source for students. He has no doubt where blame lies; instead of sitting down to discuss wages with their employers, the Miners' Federation have turned aside to politics; there has been political interference with industry, the word nationalization has darkened counsel. Let the Miners' Federation find leaders of the old type, and peace will reign within the industry and all will once again be well.

The problem, however, is not as simple as Mr. Cook, and these moralizing judgments give no answer to the question, why the mining industry, with its elaborate equipment of conciliation machinery, long established and generally successful in the past, could not adjust itself to post-war conditions without a disastrous succession of stoppages. Nor will the answer be found by reversing Mr. Raynes's point of view and blaming it all on to poor Mr. Evan Williams and the Mining Association.

Part of the answer is in Mr. Raynes's own book, if he had disentangled it, the remainder Mr. Bellerby supplies in his short treatise, lucid, persuasive, though written almost in despair. The human relations between colliery managements and their men are mercifully different from those of their representative associations, and Mr. Raynes reveals how two stiff and clumsy organizations were gradually forced into a situation for whose difficulties their structure was inappropriate. The crux of the problem in Great Britain was the wide variation between districts, in wages, customs, the costs of coal getting, in markets and prospects. Coal is not a substance produced to a standard formula on simple cost-accounting; the district differentials largely represent economic realities, and there are fairly well defined limits to any generalized treatment of their problems. Wages have always been calculated on a district basis, and the main preoccupation of the Mining Association since 1919 has been to get all labour questions back on to that basis. For the Miners' Federation on the other hand, power, status, and even continued existence, rested on a centralized and national treatment of these questions. Below a surface unanimity the differences of the district unions were acute and the loyalty of some districts—not always the weakest—was notoriously unreliable. Herein lay much of the value of the cry for nationalization; it was a cohesive idea, promising a situation where the concentrated power of the Federation could be, politically and economically, most effective.

The Minimum Wage Act of 1912 marks the first great success of this new outlook of the Federation, and it is almost the last. War conditions gave a false impression of their power; centripetal pressure was applied direct upon the Government, and Mr. Raynes misses, for example, the significance of Mr. Lloyd George's dash into South Wales in 1915 and his concession there of terms upon which his colleague, Mr. Runciman, was supposed to be negotiating with the Federation leaders. The war-time system of wage advances upon a uniform basis, applied nationally, helped to obscure district differentials, and with the Sankey Commission the Federation might have felt themselves in sight of the goal.

Since then it has been one disaster after another. The Federation are constitutionally incapable of saying Yes; it is a handicap in negotiations which has resulted more than once in worse terms than could have been had for the asking by leaders who intended to secure the adoption of the bargain they had made.

But there was another, and deeper, error, both of owners and miners. As Mr. Bellerby makes clear, they were forgetting Europe. There was a European coal industry, slowly extricating itself from the confusion of the war, helped in this effort by our stoppages, and stirred on by a memory of paying £4 a ton for British coal during the first period of industrial "reconstruction." And so, suddenly, the British coal industry had to fight, not perhaps for its life, but for the balance of production that makes the difference between loss and profit. Colliery fought colliery, district was undercutting district, and under a leadership completely incompetent to understand what was happening and heartening its followers with childish rhyming slogans, the imposing façade of the Miners' Federation collapsed.

For the moment there is disorder in the industry, at home and throughout Europe. But at last it is being recognized, and the gap between demand and potential production can no longer be ignored. Here and there small groups are bringing back shape into the industry by amalgamations, by regulated output, by embryonic cartels, and by that inconspicuous but essential preliminary, an attempt to grade coals. It is not long since the Mining Association pooh-poohed the grading of coal; specialized "marks" were essential. There is hope when the Mining Association learns.

Here Mr. Bellerby picks up the story. The coal situation is an international situation, and it is by international action alone that health will be found. Nor is this merely Utopian. The demand for coal is comparatively inelastic; deep price-cuts induce no proportionate increase in demand but are gifts to the same consumer, while a small reduction of supply quickly produces a recovery of prices. The first essential is to check an excessive production, and for this he proposes an international agreement on hours in the industry. Next can follow an agreement on minimum wage standards, and finally a scheme to adjust output to demand. He puts his case simply, almost too simply, but his main argument, for international action, is self-proved. But Great Britain is not yet ready for such action, neither in spirit, for we still believe in "each for himself and the devil take the hindmost," nor in organization. Premature action would be dangerous; there is still much cutting of dead wood and clearing of undergrowth to be done, then we may see the wood for the trees. The process is very painful, all the more so because it is still haphazard. Will Mr. Bellerby, reading Mr. Raynes's book, write us another "Miners' Next Step"?

CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Annales d'Histoire du Christianisme. 3 Vols. (Paris: Editions Rieder. 25 fr. each.)

UNDER this title the papers read at the Historical Congress held last year at the Collège de France, in connection with the Jubilee of M. Loisy, have been edited by M. Paul Louis Couchoud. They are of exceptional interest and importance. Singly, they are the work of scholars of European reputation; collectively, they present us with a detached and scientific view of the principal questions before the religious thought of our time; these being treated mainly on historical lines.

What is known as Modernism is not a matter of holding, or not holding, certain opinions; it is a matter of knowing, or not knowing, certain facts. It is not a matter of holding certain opinions, because the spirit in which we hold our opinions is more important than the opinions are themselves; it is possible to hold liberal opinions in an illiberal way. And it is a matter of knowing, or not knowing, certain facts, because the tradition of the elders is fatal to understanding: "Whosoever Moses is read, a veil lieth upon their heart." Remove this, and the text speaks for itself; it almost literally jumps to our eyes. And there is no going back upon this:—

"On peut sortir de l'orthodoxie théologique par la porte de la dialectique et y rentrer par la fenêtre de la mystique. L'exégèse ne connaît point de ces retours, ceux qu'elle a libérés du dogmatisme le sont pour toujours."

Three recent works on the Eucharist, M. Coulange's "La Messe," M. Lietzmann's "Messe und Herrenmahl," and M. Loisy's criticism of the latter in these "Annales," are cases in point. And though the name of M. Delafosse is not among those of the contributors to this work, one cannot but be struck by the frequent references to his ingenious theory of the Marcionite influences found in the Epistles of St. Paul and in the Fourth Gospel. This theory is too revolutionary to find easy acceptance, and on points of detail it is probably open to modification: criticism criticizes itself. But the doors unlocked by its author will remain open; since F. C. Baur, no one has broken up so much new ground.

Miss Petre's paper on Baron von Hügel and Father Tyrrell, a translation of which has appeared in the HIBBERT JOURNAL, will be of special interest to English readers. Of von Hügel it may be said, as has been said so happily by Guignebert of Duchesne: "Oui, je le sais: le savant maître vous a quelque peu déçu par la suite." Faced by a cruel alternative, he chose as conscience dictated; and perhaps forgot that the conscience of others imposed upon them another and a harder choice. How he escaped the fate of Loisy and Tyrrell remains a mystery. For "he was not only a modernist, but an arch-modernist; the pioneer of English Modernism; its unquestioned leader and chief." No one was more conscious of the follies and crimes of the Papacy and the Court of Rome; but, like the pious Shem, he "covered his father's nakedness." He had a singular, perhaps an excessive, deference for ecclesiastical authority: for him Peter was Peter; and he would not "rebuke him to the face," though he admitted that "he was to be blamed." He would have said, with Troeltsch, that a Church was "a necessary evil"; but he accentuated the former rather than the latter quality; "he was balanced and circumspect; of all the leaders of the movement he was the least and the most seldom deceived." In opinion he was more advanced than many of the victims of the Reign of Terror which followed the accession of Pius X. Israel was scattered. "Que faites vous ici, Monseigneur?" asked a friend who met Duchesne in Egypt. "J'attends la mort d'Hérode," was the reply. But von Hügel was prudent: his public utterances became more and more cautious; one found, and found increasingly in them, what Miss Petre describes as "that dominant quality of moderation, which saved him, no doubt, from shipwreck, but also stood between him, and intellectual and spiritual heroism." He was perhaps a saint, but there are saints and saints; and it was not in him to be a martyr. Tyrrell, on the other hand, was assuredly a martyr; and "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

The final address, delivered by M. Loisy, is an admirable summary of the conflict between Rome and Modernism, which opened with the publication of "L'Evangile et l'Eglise," 1902, and ended with the Encyclical "Pascendi," 1907.

It is easy to-day to see that the dream of a reform and renewal of Catholicism from within came through the gate of ivory: "tu sembles avoir dormi sur la pierre blanche, au milieu du peuple des songes." And its realization was, no doubt, incompatible, not only with the dogma, but with what is more essential than the dogma, the genius and history of the Church.

But at the time this was not obvious; reasonable men could still hope. Leo XIII., who was in the line of the greater Popes, hesitated: he could not bless; he would not condemn. But he was in the position of "him that now letteth"; on his removal the storm broke. The story is a squalid one; an odious record of tyranny and intrigue. The choice for M. Loisy was between excommunication and the absolute retraction of his writings and opinions. His decision met with the approval of the wisest and best of the French Bishops of the time, the late Mgr. Mignot, Archbishop of Albi: "fin psychologue et connaissant l'esprit de la curie romaine, aussi mon tempérament, il estimait que le conflit était pour moi sans issue, que ma place n'était plus dans l'Eglise." The Archbishop died in 1918; von Hügel in 1925. It is pleasant to learn that friendly relations between the three scholars remained unbroken to the end.

THE SCIENTIFIC TWILIGHT

From Magic to Science. By CHARLES SINGER. (Benn. 25s.)

Pioneers of Plant Study. By ELLISON HAWKS. (Sheldon Press. 12s. 6d.)

DR. CHARLES SINGER wears his weight of learning as lightly as the Lorica of Gildas the Briton—of which he gives a most interesting account in one of his essays—and the seven papers now collected from scattered publication during the past decade irradiate what he aptly calls "the scientific twilight" of the Dark Ages. We are sometimes inclined to exaggerate either the knowledge or the ignorance of mediæval Europe, by confining our study to Dante on the one hand or to "the bestial practices of the peasantry" on the other. Dr. Singer rightly strikes an intellectual average, and has been happily inspired in "placing the Lorica of Gildas, the history of the herbal and the Anglo-Saxon magical material by the side of St. Hildegard and the School of Salerno." Valuable to the student as they all were in their original issues, these essays gain immensely by their collocation in a single volume: parts of them have been rewritten for the sake of preserving continuity. It should be added that their value is enhanced by the reproduction of more than a hundred curious drawings from contemporary manuscripts, of which the fourteen in colour are extremely creditable alike to the taste of the selector and the skill of the copyist.

It is not easy to define the limits of the Dark Ages, to say exactly where began the "process of slow decline from the intellectual efficiency of classical antiquity," and where the recovery was completed. Dr. Singer fixes these limits, for convenience, at the end of the fourth century, when with the death of Theon the mathematician "we part altogether with the impulse of the science of antiquity," and the year 1543, in which appeared the epoch-making treatises of Vesalius on human anatomy and Copernicus on the celestial motions. A new era was then brought into being for the study alike of the microcosm and the macrocosm—those two favourite ideas of mediæval science, of which Dr. Singer gives one of the best explanations available for the general reader who wants help with his "Faust." Of course, it may be truthfully argued that the mediæval trance of science really ended three centuries earlier with Roger Bacon, whose long and fruitful life was almost contemporaneous with the thirteenth century, and for this reason Dr. Singer has little to say of developments later than the twelfth century.

The true difference between the Dark Ages and their predecessors and followers is probably to be found in the fact that magic for the time took the place of science as ruler of men's intellect and practice. Definitions are difficult, but as good as any are Dr. Singer's, that science is based on the conception of a reasonable universe, whilst magic is "primitive unorganized belief as to the relation of cause and effect." Hence incidentally it follows that the miracles of the man of science not only come off—except sometimes when they are needed to illustrate a popular lecture!—but can be repeated. The miracles of the shaman or medicine-man occasionally come off, it is true, but they cannot be repeated at pleasure. The origins of science and magic are alike to be found in that faculty of the human intellect which is always seeking for the true causes of events, to which we owe it that we are no longer sleeping in trees and eating raw meat with our fingers. The savage who decorates his cave with pictures of the beasts which he hunts, in order to bring the originals within his power, or shoots a grass image of a buffalo to-day in order to get a real one to-morrow, or chews a bit of wood in order to soften the heart of his enemy; the Roman physician who cured quartan ague with the fourth book of the Iliad, or decided that a baby born under Leo would have a lion-like heart—all were working on the lines of scientific inquiry, and some of them kept on to give us aeroplanes and wireless and motor-cars. Dr. Singer, however, deals mainly with the devious tracks that died away in swamps and thickets; but it is very pleasant to trace them with his helpful guidance.

Mr. Ellison Hawks covers a certain area of the same ground as Dr. Singer, especially in his descriptions of mediæval herbals. He traces the history of botany, in a

partly biographic and partly anecdotal fashion, from the earliest recorded days of Egypt and Assyria down to the nineteenth century. It is hopeless, of course, to get back to the real pioneers; wheat and linen were in daily use six thousand years ago. Mr. Hawks reminds us that Herodotus knew of the Indian trees which, instead of fruit, bore wool excelling that of the sheep in beauty; that Pliny described sugar as "a kind of honey which collects in reeds, white like gum, and brittle to the teeth"; that a ninth-century traveller told how the Chinese poured boiling water on the leaf of a bushy shrub, "and this drink cures all sorts of diseases." He is most entertaining in his account of more fabulous plants, such as the mandrake, whose dying shriek slew the hound that was forced to pluck it from the ground, the vegetable lamb and the barnacle goose. There might, perhaps, have been a note on Steevens's famous legend of the Upas-tree, which Darwin was hoaxed into incorporating in his "Loves of the Plants."

JONAH IN DIPLOMACY

Heading for the Abyss. By PRINCE LICHNOWSKY. (Constable. 25s.)

THE German edition of this book was published last year. It is a miscellany of papers written by Prince Lichnowsky at different times between 1914 and 1927, of letters and diplomatic documents, and of "political aphorisms." In effect, they deal with only two subjects: Prince Lichnowsky's view of Bismarck's policy with regard to Austria and Russia, and his account and defence of his diplomatic activities as Ambassador in London from November, 1912, to August, 1914. The most important and interesting of the contents are the reprint of his "My Mission to London," which was written in 1916 and published without his consent in Switzerland during the war, some of his letters, and the collection of his reports to the German Chancellor and Foreign Office during July, 1914.

The book does not add anything material to our knowledge of the policy and diplomacy which led to the war. But it has considerable interest for the student of foreign politics and cannot be ignored by the historian of the twentieth century. Accumulatively it gives a vivid picture of German diplomatic methods under the Kaiser's regime. It is also a complete vindication of Prince Lichnowsky. In London he was known as a cultured and charming man who worked with all his powers for good relations between Britain and Germany. This book shows him to have been the same when he wrote to Herr Bethmann-Hollweg as he was in Sir Edward Grey's room at the Foreign Office or in his own London drawing-room. That in itself is sufficient to explain why he did not commend himself to a regime which still worked by Bismarck's methods, but without Bismarck's realistic intelligence. Lichnowsky had, at least, the supreme merit of an Ambassador, he told his own Government the truth, however unpalatable it might be to them. He was not a very wise, tactful, or strong man, but history shows that again and again he was right, where the vulgar, stupid Kaiser and his shifty crew of tenth-rate Bismarcks and sham Napoleons were hopelessly wrong. He was in an impossible position in London, for he was disliked and distrusted by his own Government and liked and trusted by the British Government and by London society. That, however, was in the tradition of the German Foreign Office since the days of Holstein; it seems to have made a point of having one or two Ambassadors in important posts whom it disliked and distrusted.

Of all the documents in this book the most interesting from many points of view are those dealing with the treaty between Germany and Britain for partitioning the Portuguese colonies. It is an unsavoury episode, typical of the "diplomatic" mind, and it makes one wonder whether honesty is not sometimes even the best foreign policy. It is extremely difficult to see how this treaty can be reconciled with our obligations to Portugal.

THE POLYNESIAN MIND

Myths and Legends of the Polynesians. By JOHANNES C. ANDERSEN, F.N.Z.Inst. (Harrap. 21s.)

It is as literature, and even "splendid literature," that Mr. Andersen presents these myths and legends of Polynesia; consequently it is on their merits as literature that criticism seems to be invited. Would it then be unfair to say of them that, unless the reader continually reminds himself that they are the invention of a people living in the Stone Age, he will find them after an hour's continuous reading inexpressibly tedious? To derive a literary, as apart from an anthropological, interest from the perusal of these stories and chants, one must go easily, and pick and choose, and skip judiciously, for the Polynesian is verbose and loves repetition. The chants, for instance, are often quite amusingly suggestive of the more dilatory style of Miss Gertrude Stein, and, indeed, demonstrate the intensive value of insistent repetition. Take this, for instance, from a charm chanted by the great legendary chief Uenuku as he broiled the heart of his unfaithful wife:—

"The cooking-oven is baking badly;
Go on, bake away the baking-oven.
The oven baking above.
The oven baking below."

Or this from the magic chant of Paikea, the great swimmer:—

"Lo! he swims; behold! he swims strongly;
Still swimming onward, enabling, enduring.
An ariki follows on, still persistently swimming; lo! he swims,
Behold! he swims away, even Paikea, an ariki,
Who goes forward continually, still keeping on swimming.
Lo! he swims; behold! he swims; upborne he swims."

So it goes on, a plethora of words padding out a paucity of ideas.

It is the same, though, perhaps, in a lesser degree, with the stories. Shorn of their verbal excrescences, which, no doubt, to the Polynesian are ornamental, many of them could be reduced to a tithe of their length. The Homers of Polynesia nod unconscionably. Yet they have the stuff of poetry in them and are really closer to "Aryan" thought than are, or were, any non-Aryan poets known to us, save, perhaps, occasionally those of Israel, who may have been subject to "Aryan" inspiration. Although Mr. Andersen favours the Maori legends, most of his lay readers are likely to prefer the Hawaiian legends of the goddess Pele as being agreeably short, lucid, and to the point. One of the more interesting legends, which recurs in many stories, is that which deals with the marriages of mortals and immortals, often with quite a Celtic fancy. There are legends, too, of the sky-god, and of the primeval separation of earth and sky, common to so many primitive cultures. The nether world of the Polynesian, one notes, is a pleasanter place than the Hades of the Greek, or the Hells of Christian and Buddhist, approximating to the Osirian Heaven, a place where terrestrial life goes on more or less agreeably. The mind that this literature discloses is not so very alien, despite the millenniums of culture that separate it from that of Western man.

Mr. Andersen, when he turns from this literature, as such, to consider its remoter origins and the origins of the people that gave it birth, is curiously daring in his attributions. He endorses the prevailing theories, that the Polynesians reached their present homes in successive waves of seafarers from Indonesia, especially Rivers's most attractive kava-drinking and betel-chewing migrations; and will have nothing to do with Dr. Macmillan Brown's assumption of Caucasian migrations from North-West Asia via Corea and Japan in a pre-Mongolic age. But when he ventures from his authorities and leads his chosen people from Ur of the Chaldees, gives them Greek affinities and Vedic Indian relationships, and speeds them to the islands "before the Phœnician navigators found their way into the Atlantic"—assuming, presumably, that the "Phœnicians" were the first Mediterranean people to pass the Pillars of Hercules—he leaves the student gasping in amazement at his chronology; to say nothing of his philology, in which such Polynesian words as Uru and Io and Ra are found to point to all kinds of incompatible conclusions. However, this is but a side issue; for the anthology of legends we have nothing but thanks.

THE MIND OF THE CHILD

Judgment and Reasoning in the Child. By JEAN PIAGET. (Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.)

The Unconscious in Action. By BARBARA LOW. (University of London Press. 5s.)

THE Catholic Church has fixed the age of reason at seven years, at which age children are considered fit to decide on the truth of the Christian religion and to affirm their belief in it at the rite of Confirmation. Popular psychology places the age of reason somewhat later, round about the age of twelve. It has remained for a modern Swiss psychologist, Professor Jean Piaget, to investigate scientifically the actual mechanism of children's thought between the ages of three and twelve.

Reasoning, says Professor Piaget, is a method of verifying or demonstrating the truth of our ideas. To a young child such a process is unnecessary. He is entirely convinced of the truth of all his ideas, there is therefore no need for him to verify them, and their truth is, no doubt, apparent to everyone else. When a child of four is shown two boxes of equal volume and asked which is the heavier, he will probably point to one of them, without feeling the weight of either, and assert with absolute conviction, "That one." The need for verifying a judgment only arises with a need for sharing our thought and convincing others that we are right, and this is a need which is not felt by a child up to about seven or eight.

For before this age a child's talk is what Professor Piaget calls "ego-centric," that is to say, it consists of soliloquies, or "collective monologue," in the course of which children speak to themselves and pay no attention to each other. Their use of language is to make it serve as an accompaniment to action, and it cannot be considered as an interchange of ideas. The fact seems to be that up to the age of seven the child assumes, on the one hand, that he understands everyone's thought without explanation, and, on the other hand, that everyone understands his thought equally without explanation.

Towards the age of seven, however, two important changes begin to appear. In the first place, his powers of objective observation of the external world begin to develop—he no longer sees merely what he knows or expects to see, but begins to see what is actually there. Besides this, his powers of reasoning in connection with concrete objects develop rapidly, and he begins to be able to distinguish stories, fantasies, and things imagined from actual events or objects. It is, no doubt, this important development in the child's mentality which the Church recognizes as the Age of Reason.

A further step, however, remains to be made. The child can reason with concrete objects, but not with abstractions; he can perform a logical operation in fact, but not yet in words, and it is the acquisition of this power, between the years of eleven and twelve, that constitutes, in popular psychology, the development of the logical faculty.

This is the main thesis of Professor Piaget's interesting book. It has been developed from a series of experiments on Swiss children, and is illustrated in a most illuminating way by examples of their spontaneous observations and answers to tests and questions. Professor Piaget's picture of the child's mind closely resembles, as he himself points out, the "autism" of Freud—the confused, undirected system of thought, indifferent to truth and rich in images and symbols, which persists in adult life in the form of dreams and phantasies.

Miss Barbara Low's book is, of course, the work of an out-and-out Freudian, and is, compared with Professor Piaget's erudite work, popular in tone. Her object is to show the bearing of psycho-analysis on education, and much of what she says will no doubt be of interest to teachers who are not acquainted with Freudian literature. To those teachers who are already familiar with the main points of Freud's teaching, and who have been looking for help in their everyday work, the book will, however, only be a disappointment. Miss Low's chief advice is that all teachers and most pupils ought to be analyzed. Unfortunately, hardly any teachers have the time or the money for this operation, and, in any case, if the pupils are to be thrown in, there are not enough psycho-analysts to go round.

POETIC TOURS

The New Argonautica. By W. B. DRAYTON HENDERSON. (Cape. 10s. 6d.)

Rhymes of the Road. By DAVID EMRYS. (Palmer. 3s. 6d.)

The Second Voyage. By CARLA LANYON LANYON. (Sidgwick. 3s. 6d.)

MR. HENDERSON claims collateral descent from Michael Drayton, and writes a poem which like "Polyolbion" seems determined to awe us by sheer bulk. But "Polyolbion" takes us only round England and Wales. "The New Argonautica" offers an excursion, under the conduct of Sir Walter Raleigh's spirit, among the stars. There are regions that Jules Verne never knew, and while Raleigh, Drake, Nunez da Vaca, and Ponce de Leon (to name some of the ship's company) are urging their phantom Argo through the astronomical ocean, there is free cosmic discussion. Incident of a nautical sort is not lacking; we take a sample from Mr. Henderson's Argument:—

"They are caught in a black nebula, similar to the dense condensation in Crux known as 'The Coal Sack.' Drake hastens up, rebukes the steersman, and tries to turn. The rudder is jammed. Trying to clear it overside he is almost suffocated in a paralyzing vapour of Absolute Negation. Argo falls through bottomless pits of this Nothingness."

In this unsafe and phenomenal Argo, the adventurous reader might travel with comfort and pleasure, if Mr. Henderson did not cumber his decks with litter; poetic verbiage and rhetorical allusion crowd every alleyway, and when one comes to the chartroom one finds it crammed from floor to ceiling with classical dictionaries and magazine covers. In short, where we most needed a clear style and brief soliloquy, we find diffuse, unflowing, and constantly circuitous talk. The stars, to which Mr. Henderson applies fine epithets, are lost in the confusion.

Mr. Emrys is a Welsh poet, endeavouring to show us in English the character of Welsh poetry. His "wayfaring" examples are facile, but occasionally fall from their tunable ease into roughness and false emphasis. His best pieces are those suggested by the actual. There are good stanzas in his elegy on the Rev. Frank Joshua, whose spiritual invitation was a "wooling song":—

"It called the drunkard from his den—
He tumbled out in sober mood;
He banged his foaming tankard down
To seek the 'fountain filled with blood.'"

That has an energy lacking in his "grey home in the west" effusions.

"The Second Voyage" is very placid; lone birds, cottage hearths, and the lazy light of a boat in the estuary are its adventures,

"And there are journeys in the oval glasses,
Dreams in the pictures, music in the fire."

It is a confession of simple desires and natural sentiments, written in unassuming and intelligible verse.

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THE OWNER-DRIVER OVER 6,000 NEW MOTOR VEHICLES PER WEEK!

WHEN the pound-per-horse-power tax on motor-cars was introduced optimists visualized the day when it would yield £10,000,000 per annum. Returns supplied to me by the Ministry of Transport show that the gross receipts from motor vehicle licences for the six months ended May 21st were nearly £20,000,000—£19,884,801 to be precise.

I am a staunch advocate of a petrol tax in preference to a levy based arbitrarily and unfairly on the bore of cylinders, but I am afraid nothing on earth will persuade the Chancellor of the Exchequer to abandon a form of taxation which yields so much money with the minimum amount of difficulty and expense. There are very few taxes harder to dodge!

I hope Mr. Winston Churchill often finds himself in a line of traffic on a road where there is not room for three vehicles abreast. It would be so consoling to think that a man of his tempestuous nature had been compelled to pause and study the reverse side of a picture which, as he rakes in our millions, must assume the colour of a fragrant rose!

Every penny of the money raised by motor taxation is going to be needed for new roads. In England alone no fewer than 50,042 new motor vehicles and 31,821 new motor-cycles were registered in March, April, and May—an average increase per week of nearly 6,300 petrol-driven machines. The number that went on to the scrap-heap in the same period was about 1 in 60, so against 6,300 machines brought on to the roads for the first time only about 105 disappeared.

Last Sunday I covered only 87 miles, but at the end of the journey I was mentally and physically tired, owing to the strain of driving on congested roads. A friend who shared the experience declared that week-end motoring had ceased to be a pleasure, and that he intended to find another form of recreation. This feeling is growing very rapidly, and unless the Ministry of Transport "steps on the gas" and accelerates its road improvement schemes the progress of the automobile industry, and all it means to the State and the community, is going to receive a rude check.

I had promised to visit Catterick last week-end, and started in fear and trembling almost, lest I should find the Great North Road congested, but the further North one got the more room did one find, and the ten miles' stretch between Boroughbridge and Londonderry was so deserted, even in the middle of a fine afternoon, that the distance was covered in twelve and a half minutes without the least fuss!

One of my travelling companions was an old cyclist who had pedalled over the same route on many occasions some thirty years ago, when the surface of the old Roman highway leading to Cataractonium was rough and dusty. Its condition to-day is unsurpassable, and as we flew along at 50 to 60 miles an hour, with a clear view for miles ahead, my friend confessed that he would willingly pay his pound-per-horse-power tax for ever and a day if the money were used in providing such safe and delightful speedways!

We were much impressed as we drove along by the increasing number of first-class hotels which are being opened on the Great North Road. A syndicate is purchasing big houses, standing in park-like surroundings, and converting them into charming guest houses for motorists. During the week we have sampled two of the latest acquisitions—one at Boroughbridge and the other at Londonderry, further north.

OILED PLUGS.

An Edinburgh lady who had new pistons fitted in re-ground cylinders recently says she is again troubled with oiled plugs after another 10,000 miles running. She asks if there is any device to overcome this trouble. Unless undue piston wear is the cause, the fault may be traceable to some defect in the magneto, resulting in a weak spark. A re-wound armature has been known to effect a cure. Much relief may be found, if a car is being run in hilly districts, by using a Bowden Extra Air Inlet when descending steep gradients. Some sparking plugs are less affected by oil than others; a wide sparking gap aggravates the trouble.

RAYNER ROBERTS.

Bona-fide readers of THE NATION may submit any of their motor inquiries to our Motoring Correspondent for his comments and advice. They should be addressed: Rayner Roberts, THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C.1.

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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY
NEW TREASURY BONDS—ASBESTOS SHARES

AS we write the stage is being set for the performance of tendering for £35,000,000 of 5 per cent. Treasury bonds 1933-35. Optimism has been imparted into the gilt-edged market. Money, which was very tight last week, has become suspiciously easy. The prices of long-dated British stocks have risen. The success of the Treasury issue is being boomed into a certainty. Is not the cheerfulness of the whole scene a trifle overdone? The minimum price for tenders for this issue is 101. This is the same price at which the issue of 5 per cent. Treasury bonds 1933-35 was made in December last year. But in December, 1927, the bonds had two options to convert into 4 per cent. Consols—in August, 1928, at £117 Consols per £100 Treasury bond, and on February 1st, 1929, at £114½ Consols per £100 Treasury bond. The present issue, which will be amalgamated with the December issue after January 2nd, has only the one option to convert—on February 1st next. Moreover, when the December issue was made, there was the prospect of cheaper money in the spring and a reduction in Bank rate. To-day there is the prospect of dearer money (call money in New York touched 7½ per cent. again on Monday), and there is the possibility of a rise in Bank rate if the fight between the Federal Reserve authorities in New York and the stock market "bulls" forces the Federal Reserve re-discount rate above 5 per cent. Those who tender for this Treasury bond issue at more than 1s. above the minimum price of 101 will probably be giving money away to the Government. The existing 5 per cent. Treasury bonds have fallen in the market from 101 5-16 to 101 1-16, which suggests that some holders have been selling their stock on the chance of getting it back at a cheaper price by tendering.

It is certainly gratifying for the Treasury that 62 per cent. of the existing 5 per cent. Treasury bonds 1933-35 should have been converted into 4 per cent. Consols last July. The new £35,000,000 issue is being made to meet the maturity of 4 per cent. and 5 per cent. National War bonds on September 1st. The Stock Exchange list gives the amount outstanding of these bonds as £198,205,278, but presumably all but some £35,000,000 have been converted into 4 per cent. and 5 per cent. War Loan. The next important maturities are as follows:—

£4,799,565	4%	National War Bonds due February 1st, 1929.*
93,930,719	5%	National War Bonds due February 1st, 1929.*
72,833,528	4½%	Treasury Bonds due February 1st, 1929.
30,637,382	5½%	Treasury Bonds due April 1st, 1929.

£202,201,194

* The National War Bonds have no option to convert into the 5 per cent. or 4 per cent. War Loans as did the series due to be repaid on September 1st.

As the Treasury authorities have not attempted to deal at the moment with this £202 million debt maturing next February and April, they probably feel as uncertain about the level of money rates this autumn as everyone does. Until some heroic measure can be attempted for the conversion of the £2,000 million of 5 per cent. War Loan, which may be repaid over the period 1929-47, the Treasury will probably continue to temporize with the debt problem.

A visitor to the film studios at Elstree is reminded of the increasing use that is being made of asbestos in building. The huge walls of the biggest of these studios are made of corrugated asbestos—a mixture of asbestos and cement. Roofs, floor-sheeting, partitions, fireplaces, stoves, electrical fittings, the brakes of motor-cars, and incombustible cloth, gloves, felt, and paper are only a few of the commercial uses of asbestos. The world output of asbestos in 1926 was 360,000 tons. Last year's output was slightly higher, but it fell short of the demand. Of the world's total output Canada accounted for 78.3 per cent., and Rhodesia for about 9 per cent. Including South Africa and Australia the whole of the British Empire

accounted for 92 per cent. Of the producing companies the Stock Exchange is interested chiefly in Rhodesian and General Asbestos and Cyprus Asbestos. Curiously enough, the recent reports issued by both these companies disappointed the market. Cyprus Asbestos has a capital of £600,000, consisting of £577,500 in 10 per cent. participating preferred shares which are entitled to 60 per cent. of the surplus profits after receiving 10 per cent., and £22,500 in deferred shares of 1s. No dividend has been paid on the deferred shares since the Company was formed in 1921, nor have the preferred shares received anything since 1922 when 10 per cent. was paid. The profit for the year ending December, 1927, amounted to £81,004, against £25,679 in the previous year. The tonnage milled in 1927 was 301,839 tons, as compared with 154,595 tons in 1926. The recovery yield per ton dropped to 3.7 per cent., giving a production of 11,168 tons, as against a recovery yield of 4 per cent. in 1926. The Company expects to mill this year 400,000 tons, which on a recovery yield of 3.7 per cent. would produce 14,800 tons. The profit for 1928 should therefore be higher than that for the previous year, but the 1s. deferred shares at 9s., and the preferred shares at 26s. 6d. seem to discount these better prospects. The market is influenced by the fact that Lord Inchcape is chairman of the Company and Sir Thomas Royden a director.

The shares of Rhodesian and General Asbestos Corporation, when we called attention to them on June 16th, were standing at 5½. They subsequently rose to about 6, but they have reacted since the publication of the report to about 5½. The report showed a reduction in profits of about 20 per cent., but as we anticipated a final dividend of 10 per cent. was declared, making 25 per cent. for the year, against 20 per cent. in the previous year. At the present price of 5½ the shares return a yield of over 4½ per cent. :—

Year ended	Capital Issued at date	Output tons.	Gross Sales. £	Net Profit. £	Dividends Paid. %
Mar. 31.	£				
1927	1,000,000	26,060	667,984	244,858	Int. 10 : Final 10
1928	1,050,000	25,151	649,006	195,244	Int. 5 : 2nd Int. 10 : Final 10

The reduction in profits was not unexpected. The ox-wagon transport broke down badly last winter, and the result was a fall in output of about 10,000 tons and in gross sales of about £18,000. The mines were connected by railway with the Rhodesian railway system in February, and since then the output has been recovering, as the following table will show:—

	1927.	1928.
April	2,121 tons	2,569 tons
May	2,038 tons	2,696 tons
June	2,033 tons	2,941 tons
July	2,233 tons	2,780 tons

The gross sales for the four months ending July, 1928, were £239,290, against £196,338 for the corresponding period of the previous year.

In their recent report the directors of Rhodesian and General Asbestos stated that the new plant at the Shabanie group of mines should be in complete operation about the end of October next when their output will gradually rise to about 2,300 tons per month, as compared with 1,640 tons per month which has been the average for the four months ending July 31st. In addition to the enlargement of the Shabanie mines, large additions to the plant at the Mashaba group of mines are contemplated. These will be financed out of earnings over a long period. For the year ending March, 1929, profits should therefore show a considerable increase. At the end of February next the directors anticipate making a satisfactory dividend declaration which points to a higher distribution for the year than 25 per cent. If it is reasonable to expect 30 per cent., an investment in the shares at 5½ is not unjustified.

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